SOLITUDE IMPROVED BY DIVINE MEDITATION;

OR,

A Treatise proving the Duty, and demonstrating the Necessity, Excellency, Usefulness, Natures, Kinds, and Requisites of *Divine Meditation.*

First intended for a Person of Honour, and now published for general Use.

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MDCLXX.

To the Christian Reader.

PUrposing some Improvement of Solitude in the late mournful year, when death was so largely commissioned to destroy by that dreadful Pestilence, I made choice of this excellent Subject of Divine Meditation.

The best way of thinking and mind-employing, is this Meditation.

The right Art and Skill of it, is a rare attainment.

The due Practice of it, is a most noble self-entertainment.

A pious Heart hath three happy ways of self-entertainment in solitary; three rare ways of being least alone, when most alone.

The first way of self-entertainment, is the Ordinance of reading and searching the Holy Scriptures, the pure, perfect, and infallible Word and Will of Christ concerning us. There Christ hath prepared his rich feast of fat things full of marrow, and his Royal Banquet of heavenly Truths. There he sets forth the great varieties of sure Directions, precious Promises, high Examples, rare Experiences,

and the help of all his holy Ordinances to ſeed and ſatiate the hungry and thirſty ſpirit.

The ſecond way of ſelf-entertainment, is Divine Meditation, by either pondering of ſpiritual things, for improving knowledge, and exciting practice; or by a weighing all other things whatever, for reducing them to a ſpiritual end and uſe.

The third way of ſelf-entertainment, is private Praying, ſuch as is both bottom'd and bounded by Chriſts will in his Word; ſuch as is both prepared and aſſiſted, made wiſe and warm by ſerious Meditation.

Meditation ſtands between the two Ordinances of Reading and Praying, as the grand Improver of the former, and the high Quickner of the latter, to furniſh the mind with choice materials for prayer, and to fill the heart with holy fervency in it.

The Naturaliſts obſerve, that to uphold and accommodate bodily life, there are divers ſorts of faculties communicated, and theſe among the reſt.

1. An attractive faculty to aſſume and draw in the food.

2. A retentive faculty to keep it, being taken in.

3. An aſſimilating faculty to concoct the nouriſhment.

4. An augmenting faculty for drawing to perfection.

1. Medi-

1. *Meditation is as the attractive faculty to help to aſſume and take in ſpiritual food. This it doth by helping to act Judgment, Wiſdom, and Faith, to ponder, diſcern, and credit the things which Reading and Hearing ſupplies and furniſhes.*

2. *It is like the retaining faculty, by aſſiſting and corroborating the memory, helping to lock up the Jewels of divine Truths ſure in that Treaſury.*

Meditation makes a rational memory of things, which is the ſureſt.

There is in man a ſenſitive memory, in which he participates with ſenſitive Natures, ſuch as beaſts, they have a kind of memory. There is alſo an intellectual or rational memory, wherein man partakes of the like Nature with Angels, they have their faculty of memory. Meditation ſuperadds to the ſenſitive memory, the help alſo of a rational memory, whereby ſpiritual things are ſecured as under double lock: what we rationally remember, is beſt remembred.

3. *It is like the aſſimilating or digeſting power, by helping to concoct ſpiritual food, and turn it into ſpiritual nouriſhment. This it helps to effect, by being inſtrumental to work things more powerfully on the will, in a free choice, firm purpoſe, and ready obedience of the excellent Truths of Chriſt; and likewiſe*

by working on and into the affections of love, joy, and the reſt to cleave unto, and be inflamed towards the things of Chriſt. A ſpiritual digeſtion is not by head-work, but heart-work, when the will deliberately and reſolvedly chuſes, and the affections earneſtly embrace heavenly things. Meditation highly conduces to this ſpiritual digeſtion by its pondering, propoſing, and edging efficaciouſly, ſuch reaſons and incentives as work the heart into compliance and obedience.

It is like, laſtly, the augmenting and growing faculty, to help the good heart to grow better, and ſhoot up higher Heaven-ward. There is one creature, the Crocodile only, which is ſaid to grow all its life time; ſo muſt the true Chriſtian do. Natural things grow by new aſſumed nouriſhment, acted upon by the inward growing power. The real godly man hath an inward growing power implanted by the new life given to him: But this, as by other means, ſo by frequent Meditation, is much aſſiſted, and carried on. Meditation waters and cheriſhes the plants of heavenly graces. It helps them to root deeper, ſhoot higher, and grow ſtronger. Such Chriſtians as meditate moſt, will grow moſt, be growing to the end.

What in all Chriſtianity is there, that Meditation is not a furtherance to?

That ſaying is excellent, worthy of dueſt

weigh-

weighing: Intellectus cogitabundus, eſt principium omnis boni; *The meditating mind is the beginner of all goodneſs. On a ſinners part it is the riſe of his initial returning to God, of his firſt converting,* Ezek. 18. 28. *In the Saints and perſons converted, it is their way to progreſſive converting and renewed repentance.* Pſal. 119. 59. I conſidered my ways and turned, &c. *The more conſideration, the more converſion. The great inlet of mans firſt Apoſtacy (beſides infidelity and pride) was his incogitancy. Our firſt Parents loſt all for want of due thinking; not for the want of acting imagination, or any thinking; that could not be; but for want of that conſideration which ſhould have been. They did not conſider all things to be conſidered.*

The overflowings of impiety, aggravated by impenitency, and mens ruſhings into ſin ſo eagerly and boldly, have been greatly from want of conſideration. Jer. 8. 6. No man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done? Every one turns to his courſe as the horſe ruſheth into the battel. *Their not returnings were from neglect of ſelf-reflectings. In any Nation when God intends to work great returnings, he ſtirs up that people to ſelf-bethinkings,* 1 Kings 8. 47. If they ſhall bethink themſelves. *He minds them of conſidering, to bring them to returning. So a*

particular person, when he first comes in to God, he comes first to himself, and that is by consideration and self-bethinking, as the Prodigal, Luke 15. 17.

In Natures Rational, the first mover is the mind by consideration: In grace, the first mover is the mind by holy Meditation. The Christian that would set all the wheels of the soul on going and improve, that would do great things, and have great attainments, great things effected on the heart, and in the life, much light and wisdom, much warmth and fervour, high resolution and courage, large proficiency in godliness, must be much in Meditation.

The greatest Scholars of the world have not been only great Readers, but Students much in musing and pondering. The most eminent Saints in all Ages have bin this way excellent, as Job, David, Solomon, *and others, in the Scriptures; as* Cyprian, Ambrose, Augustine, *and other Saints in succeeding Ages.*

Upon these, and sundry other considerations, this ensuing Treatise was taken in hand.

My purpose at first was only a private piece, for the service of an honourable personage, very exemplary in this pious practice. This occasioned also my taking the greater liberty in the manner of expressions. My intendment once accomplisht, I entertained no thoughts of

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a Publication, till some intimate Friends, having the sight of the Copy, importuned me to let it come forth for the general use; upon which, a Review of the whole being made, with divers Alterations and Additions, to reduce it more to the help of all, I resolved to let it come abroad, though imperfect enough. In the first framing, because I could not make use of my Study usual helps, Sentences, and Quotations (the ordinary trimmings) were wanting. And being not willing to farther trouble my self, make the Treatise swell, and the price rise, I thought it best to let it pass as it is now presented to thy view.

The present Age is full of Books; there be Books too many, and yet too few. Knowledge and wisdom will never in this world arrive at a Nil ultra; *yet we must ever tend to perfection, and press hard to the mark. And when so many still write after so many excellent Treatises on the same subject; this ensuing may the better pass in the crowd. Though there be the greater lights of Heaven, the Sun, and Moon, and Stars of the first magnitude, yet the least appearing Star is some lustre to the Heaven, and light to the Earth. Though some pieces of gold Coyn are current, being fair and down weight; yet those more worn and light, may pass in greater payments.*

Shall this ensuing Treatise issue in perswading,

ding, or provoking thee to the due practice of holy Meditation, to make thee a true and real Meditater, or a better and a higher Meditater, to teach thee to take a turn often in the Garden of God, and take the freſh Air of Paradiſe, to be mentally in ſerious muſings, often mounting up to Heaven, and return more enlarged and inflamed, more wiſe and warm at the heart: Let me only requeſt this of thee, to improve ſome of that acquired warmth in thy way of fervent praying, for him that is ever thy Servant in the things of Jeſus,

Nathanael Ranew.

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BY reason of the Authors absence from the Press, several faults are escaped, which the Reader is intreated to correct, or candidly pass by.

SOLITUDE IMPROVED IN MEDITATIONS Upon *DIVINE MEDITATION.*

THat ſo noble Subject, and neceſſary Duty, of *Divine Meditation*, I have now choſen, by Chriſts aſſiſtance, to ſpeak of to you.

Of Meditation *in general*, according to *Scripture-latitude*, in the various Kinds and Conſiderations of it there expreſt. My Text therefore, *muſt not be one ſingle* Scripture, for the *total foundation* of what I ſhall tender, but the univerſal vote, and paſſages aſperſt through the Bible: ſome of which are theſe you may pleaſe to turn unto.

1 *Tim.* 4. 15. *Meditate upon theſe things.* There *Timothy*, and in him, by way of proportion, every perſon, is commanded Meditation. *Pſal.* 1. 2. *In that Law doth he meditate day and night.* If the bleſſed man doth ſo meditate, then all who will be bleſſed, muſt do the like.

And *Pſal.* 77. 12. *I will meditate on all thy works.* Both the word and works of God, muſt be the godly mans meditation.

Pſal. 63. 6. and *Meditate on thee, in the night-watches.* And *Pſal.* 104. 34. *My Meditation of him ſhall be ſweet.* God muſt be meditated on, and that Meditation ſhould be ſweet.

Obſ. From theſe and the like paſſages ſcattered over the Bible, the Obſervation or Concluſion is this: Pious Meditation is the Duty of every Chriſtian; or, *It is the high Inſtitution of* Chriſt, *and greatly Incumbent duty of Chriſtians, to exerciſe themſelves much in holy Meditation.*

A rare and *ſoul-enriching way*, ſuch as none know the ſweetneſs and bleſſed *Incomes* of it, but ſuch who exerciſe themſelves in it.

Philoſophers tell us, there would be no life or motion in the lower World, if the Sun and Celeſtial Bodies ſtood ſtill.

Phyſicians ſay, if the *Heart* did not continually beat in the Body, there would be no life and motion in the little World, *Man.*

And Experience proves, if there were no Springs or Weights in Watches and artificial Engines, they could perform nothing.

What the Sun, Moon, and Stars are to life and motion here below, what the Heart is to the Bodies life and moving, and what the Springs and Weights are to Motions Artificial, that in a high degree is Meditation to ſpiritual Life and Motion.

Of the various things tendred to us for truths, this is the great Trier, the Percolation and Refiner, the Melioration and Improver. Such things that come to us crude and raw, become *mellow* and *concocted* by

by Meditation. It is the *Golden Scale* to give Divine things their due weight. The Souls *Rare Limbeck* to effect the higheſt Operations, to extract the richeſt Spirits for Heart uſe.

Meditation is of that happy Influence, it makes the *Mind* wiſe, the *Affections* warm, the *Soul fat* and *flouriſhing*, and the *Converſation* greatly fruitful. *Pſal.* 119.

Who can but practiſe it, continue it, contend to larger improvements in this Heavenly Art, that hath once experienced and fed upon the ſurpaſſing ſweetneſs and refreſhments, the unſpeakable ſolaces and raviſhments, both had and heightned in it?

To ſpeak of it *adequately* I cannot, it is ſuch an attainment that none know *the All of it*. Nothing but progreſs in the daily practice, can help to comprehend it. There is ſtill, a *plus ultra*, a *Going and a Knowing further*.

I ſhall ſpeak to four things only concerning Meditation.

1. The *Precedents* upon the File of Scripture, or ſome rare Examples of the Practice, and but briefly.

2. The *Nature*, *Ingredients*, *Qualifications*, and the ſeveral ſorts of *Meditation*: and here I muſt be ſomething large.

3. The Grounds, and *ſupporting Reaſons* of it, to manifeſt it.

4. The *diverſe Improvements* of it to divers ſorts of perſons.

First, The Precedents on the Sacred File, recorded Inſtances in Scripture.

There are among others, *four* Inſtances, which I ſhall ſingle out, four famous, holy, and eminent ones.

The first is that of the *godly Patriarch Isaac*, Gen. 24. 63. *Isaac went out, in the Evening, to meditate.* God is a most *free Agent*, as in all other actings, so in conferring his *Scripture Honours*. He honours whom he pleaseth, and when and how he pleaseth. He is bound to give no account of his matters. And oft we see him in his Goings and Doings, but *cannot* by searching *find him out*. *Job.* 11. 7. Divine Soveraignty and Wisdom, is pleased in the Scripture Records, to *fix the first honour*, of this practice of Meditation, on holy *Isaac*.

Doubtless, his so excellent Father, *holy Abraham*, did use to beat this path to Heaven, who walkt so *much with God*. Doubtless those other Patriarchs and Saints, living before *Abraham*, *travelled* much in this heavenly Road. *Enoch* for his *walking* with God, so highly honoured, was no stranger to this way. Questionless it was one *of his walks*. He *certainly* used to go *to Heaven Mentally*, before he was translated *Personally*. *He used to ascend up* by Meditation, before his *happy translation*. But *Isaac* is he who first is mentioned, for acting this holy Meditating. It may be he *exceeded* and *excelled* in this Heavenly Art and Practice; and because it was a Duty performed privately, and that was not known, God would reward and honour him *openly*, by making it known, and that some hundreds of Years after, by *Moses* his *holy Pen*.

It's probable there was something more than ordinary in it, which occasioned this first Record of Meditation. However, this was the holy pleasure of *God* so to fix it; to place it first on the File of godly Meditators. *Isaac* is the first mentioned *Meditator* in Scripture Records.

In-

Inſtance 2. The ſecond (which is the *fulleſt* to all intents and reſpects) is that high and noble *Precedent* of holy *David*, *That man after Gods own heart*: among other reaſons, I believe, for his beating ſo much this path to Heaven: for the frequencies of his viſits made this way.

He ſoon became a man of *Great Troubles* and *Diſquiets*: yet then in them, he would *reſolutely cut out* his way, and keep his courſe of holy Meditation; witneſs thoſe many Pſalms penned in and on occaſions of his troubles, and ſtiled his Meditations. He after *Sauls* death is crowned King of *Judah*, had his great multitudes of high Employments, was a mighty Warriour, and ſo muſt be expoſed to higheſt hazards; yet nothing, in no time whatever, ſhould check or retard his courſe. Though he had his *Head* full of Thoughts, his *Heart* full of Troubles, his *Hands* full of Work, nothing ſhould hinder him in this *high Exerciſe* of his ſo experienced ſweet Meditation.

In *Pſal.* 1. 2. He makes Meditation the Character of a bleſſed man, *To meditate in Gods Law day and night.* And what he makes a Rule for others, he makes good in his own Example.

Pſal. 119. 97. *O how love I thy Law, it is my Meditation all the day*! there's the practice of the firſt time the *day*, and a full Example, and Practice, *All the day.*

And *Pſal.* 119. 148. *Mine Eyes prevent the Night-Watches, to meditate in thy Word*; there's the practice of the other time mentioned in the Character in *Pſal.* 1. 2.

Not a Watch ſet in the Night, but he had his Meditation. O moſt admirable frame of ſpirit!

A King and a daily Meditator, and a night Meditator alſo!

It was not Family Buſineſs, nor State Affairs, not Wars Urgencies and Difficulties, that ſo could crowd in and impoſe upon his thoughts, but he would have his ſpiritual *retreats*, his ſoul *repaſts*, in Meditation, mount up to Heaven by it. Trace we him with the Eye of dueſt Obſervation over the Book of Pſalms, (the Pſalms which are the choice and rare Records *of his Exemplary this way actings*) we find moſt excellent Patterns, of all ſorts, as for this holy Exerciſe: Singular Meditations ſometimes of the great Works of God, as *Pſal.* 8. and *Pſal.* 19. and *Pſal.* 104. *&c.* wherein the Fire kindles and flies up, in the higheſt ſtrains. His heart, like the moſt rare and exquiſite Engine and Inſtrument, produces ſuch raiſed and ſublimated things, that tranſcend ſometimes all the ſtrains of *Rhetorick*, and *Poetry* in the world, as ſome very learned men obſerve.

Sometime his Meditations (and there they ply more, as of nearer concernment) are on *the Word of God*, as *Pſal.* 19. and *Pſal.* 119. *&c.* and what paſſages and praiſes hath he, moſt high and ſweet, and ſavoury, that what can be fuller and high, for the nature and properties of it!

Sometimes the *moſt bleſſed God himſelf* is the high ſubject of his Meditating: and what tranſcendencies of thoughts, what Raptures and Raviſhments, what Inſtances of higheſt Soul tranſportings hath he this way recorded for us, purpoſely to put us upon purſuit of the like Glimpſes and Taſtes, by ſuitable firſt breathings and pantings after ſweeteſt communion with him!

It is evident, he was a *grand Maſter* in this Art of Me-

Meditation, by the ſo *exquiſite pieces* drawn to the life, and reſerved for uſe and imitation in the Book of Pſalms.

3. The third Pattern is that of the *ſo wiſe Solomon*, in *Eccleſiaſtes*, who gave his *heart*, as he ſaith, to *ſeek* and *ſearch*, and to *know wiſdom*, *Eccl.* 1. 13. and *v.* 17. *ch.* 2. 12. *Davids* ſtrain of Meditation, *proceeds principally* on matters in themſelves *ſpiritual*, as God, his Word, and Ways, and ſometimes on the Works of God. *Solomons* more upon *things natural*, and the ways and works of men, *Eccl.* 1. 13, 14. but to demonſtrate the *inſufficiency of all things* in the world, and all the works of men, to make up true happineſs, without the true fear of God, and keeping his Commandments, *Eccl.* 12. 13.

This is the ſum and ſcope chiefly of that his Book, that Book of moſt deep and great Conſiderations, and excellently uſeful Meditations, for all to obtain wiſdom by.

It is (of all) the *choiceſt piece* of Scripture, in this kind; it ſets us an accurate Copy, of regular and fruitful Contemplation and Meditation, of all things under the Sun, which we ſhould ſtrive to imitate and write after. *Chap.* 1. 14. It is left us thereby to learn from him, the ſo great *Experimenter* and *Tryer*, the wiſeſt and moſt exquiſite weigher of all things, and the *Finder* of their extream inſufficiency and vanity.

To teach every perſon, by this his ſo eminent and exemplary acting, his ſucceſsful ſearching, to do in the like manner. To *infuſe his ſpirit*, and lay it aſteep ſtrongly and deeply in this Meditation, of Creature vanity, and the vanity of all mens labours under the Sun.

Yea to *ſink this* down to the bottom of the ſoul,

there to fix and root it self; thence as by a most potent and predominant principle, to work and act up to more *weanedness* from things of the world; and to more *wariness*, of our being ensnared by them.

The fourth *rare Instance* is of the female Sex, That of the *Blessed Virgin Mary*. Luke 2. 19. *But Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart.* This is the *remarkable* and special Example of Meditation mentioned (that I know of) in the New Testament: We have none so punctual and plain, which I can remember, as this.

Some *signal* honour is hereby intended to this so Blessed Virgin, to be so noted, more than others, in the Gospel Records: and thereby held forth, as a pattern, and provocation to all after Ages.

The *Scriptures silence*, as to other Saints practice in this Duty, is not a *Negative* or an *Exclusive of their doing it*: Because it is not said of every one, they Pondered, or Meditated, we must not thence infer they did it not.

David in the first Psalm and second Verse, saith, the *Blessed man meditates in the Law of God, day and night.* He therefore makes it a necessary Duty, and certain Character of every godly person, *in some sincere measure*, and *constancy performing of it.*

As the people of God are all taught *wisdom* to salvation, so this *peculiar wisdom*, this way of *Meditation*, of the great concerns of Gods Kingdom, and their most precious immortal Souls, to give things of the highest importance, their *due* and *down weight*, their due and down weight in the Ballance of a holy Meditation.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Nature and Deſcription of this ſolemn Meditation.

MEditation according to the uſual Notion and Acceptation, is taken for any ſerious or earneſt thinking of any matter whatſoever, for what end ſoever, whether it be good or evil. So Meditating is uſed in the Scripture, not only in a good ſenſe, but in an evil ſenſe. So *Pſal.*

But ordinarily it is taken in a good ſenſe, for a holy Mind Exerciſe, or acting the thoughts in any ſerioufneſs upon any matter in a ſpiritual manner. There is a double kind of Meditation.

1. That which is more ſet and ſolemn, when a man is ſerious in thinking of any thing for ſome ſpiritual end, and ſo as to allow ſome due ſpace of time for a right performance of it.

2. There is that which is called Meditation of Ejaculation, which, though ſerious, yet is more ſhort and quick, and ſudden, wherein the ſoul darts up to Heaven, and makes a ſhort viſit thither.

I ſhall begin with the firſt, that which more commonly is called Meditation. The other ſhall follow in its due place.

Therefore having mentioned ſome Scripture Inſtances or Examples of Meditation as to the practice of it, I ſhall come to handle the Nature and Deſcription of the ſet and more ſolemn Meditation.

Here firſt I will endeavour to preſent you with the

the true Picture, and *Deſcription* of Meditation, in ſome Scripture lineaments and proportions: and afterward the Explication and peculiar handling of them.

I ſhall give you the Deſcription in this manner; It is that *Ordinance* of *Chriſt*, and *Obedience* or *Duty* of a *Chriſtian*, whereby he acts his ſpirit into a *right pondering* of either *heavenly* and *ſpiritual things*, or *any other things*, in a *holy* manner, unto *ſpiritual* and *holy* ends and improvements only.

1. Here is the more *general* Nature founding it.

2. The more *peculiar* Nature and particular Requiſites finiſhing it.

1. The more general Nature, in a *double Aſpect*: The *firſt looks* up to Chriſt, it is his Ordinance, his Inſtitution. The *ſecond looks* down to man, it is his Obedience, his Duty.

2. Here is the particular Nature and Requiſites. Where firſt

1. *The Object.* I will conſider the *Proper Object* of this Meditation, in two parts; 1. Things *ſpiritual* and heavenly. 2. Things though not in themſelves ſpiritual: yet in a *ſpiritual* manner lookt upon.

2. *The acting on it.* The acting on this Object, by way of *right pondering*, where many particulars will be opened.

3. The Ends of this Meditation, for only ſpiritual ends, or the ends to be levell'd at, muſt be ſpiritual and only holy.

1. The more general Nature of Meditation, we ſpeak to: It's 1. Chriſts own Ordinance. 2. And then mans Duty and Obedience. It is Chriſts own Ordinance, as thoſe Scriptures fore-cited, and many others,

others, which will be after-named, prove.

Three things there are in an Ordinance of Chriſt, which I ſhall ſpeak of.

1. The *Riſe and Original*, it is heavenly.
2. The *Nature*, it is ſpiritual and holy. Yea,
3. The uſe and end, it is for a help.

1. For the *Riſe* and *Original*, it is glorious and tranſcendent: it comes as *far* as Heaven; it is Heaven-born and bred. It bears *Chriſts Image* and ſuperſcription, Brings his *Broad-ſeal* and Commiſſion, it is one *bright beam* of Chriſts Sovereignty, ſhining down upon us, *One holding out* of his Golden Scepter, for us to touch the top of it. It comes *with the King of Heavens Muſt*, it muſt be yielded to, done as the ſtrict and high Command of the great King of Saints, given in *Indiſpenſible* Neceſſity: yea with the very ſame *Cogency* and *Neceſſity*, that Praying, Hearing the Word, or any other moſt uſually yielded to Duty doth.

Commonly (as by our daily practice we prove it) we *lay not ſuch ſtreſs* upon Divine Meditation, as we do upon other Scripture Inſtitutions. As if there were a *leſs weight of Chriſts Regal Scepter* in it. As if it were *not ſo current Coin* of his; but rather like *ſome light Gold*, which we need not receive, except we pleaſe. Whereas this Duty of Meditation comes in Chriſts Name, to every ſoul; and with a *Commiſſion as full and firm*, as any other Goſpel Command or Duty whatſoever.

2. An Ordinance of *Chriſt is holy*. Every Inſtitution is a participation, and carries a ſtamp and beam of God's glorious Holineſs. Not only of his Regal Authority, but of his inconceivable *Holineſs* and *Purity*: The Holineſs of God is, that *glorious*

Attri-

Attribute of his, whereby being free from all Impurity, he wills and orders all things for his *Name* and *Glory*.

The holineſs of an Ordinance, is chiefly that by which it is *laid* and *levelled* full at the grand ſcope and mark of *God's higheſt praiſe* and *honour*. It muſt be lookt on, and repreſented to us, as an Appointment for the moſt High God, his Higheſt Intereſt. All *Religion* is principally *for living to the Living God*, *Rom.* 6. 7. *Heb.* 9. 14. All Ordinances are but the higher and *more eminent ways* given us, for exalting him. So *many aſcents* and riſing grounds, whereby he may mount aloft, and become more tranſcendently great and glorious. If this be not the predominant Ingrédient in our performances, we are quite miſtaken; and ſo *take his bleſſed name in vain*. This therefore being the *chief thing*, this Ordinance of Meditation ſtands charged with, muſt accordingly be minded and meant in it, God's Inſtitution of it. Firſt, for his *own higheſt Intereſt*, his intending it firſt for himſelf, who ſo infinitely ſurpaſſes all Created Beings and their *total Intereſts*, whatſoever they can amount unto. This is the ſecond Conſiderable, an Ordinance is Holy, chiefly inſtituted for lifting up God.

3. An Ordinance *is helpful*, for our heavenly help; by Grace and the *Lord's* Condeſcenſion, it is an Appointment and Inſtitution for us. For our chief Intereſt, the High-way of our Souls help: an Intendment and a Means to the main Mark of Happineſs: The *ſingular way* of our God's deviſing: The *ſweet way* of our great Prophets *Teaching*: Chriſt's firſt ſetting me up a Light, and therewith lending me his hand of help; all Goſpel Ordinances

nances carry *light* and *help* with them: The Scriptures call them ways, *Pſal.* 119. 3. They are *Gods ways*, and they are alſo *our ways*. They are firſt the King of Heaven's High-ways, his Inſtitutions and Appointments for us: And they are our ways, our High-ways to travel up to the City of God, Heaven: our ways to walk in to our chief Happineſs.

I muſt look upon Chriſts Ordinances, not as meer *Impoſitions* and *ſignifications* of Chriſts Sovereignty; not as Burdens and Tasks, the *products* and *effects* of ſeverity; but ſuch as are the *Demonſtrations* of his Graciouſneſs and Pity: He ſets me, and ſhews me the way, who juſtly might leave me to loſe my way, and to loſe my ſelf; to loſe both my Labour and Life, Heaven and Happineſs, and that for ever.

Theſe three forementioned Conſiderations, ah what extream need hath every one, *to give them the keeneſt edge*, to make Meditation *more penetrative* and powerful? To both *facilitate* it to us, and *fortifie* it in our Hearts?

Ah when we are to Meditate, how do we ſtill find our ſpirits all over-run and tainted with carnal and *belliſh Repugnancies*, and recoilings againſt it? *Rom.* 7. 21. how *biaſſed and acted* with ſtrong diverſions from it? How *ſunk down ſuddenly*, in deadneſs and flatneſs in it? How *overcome* with fainting fits and feebleneſs in it, from the poyſonous Fumes and dangerous Damps, aſcending out of the Hell of Corruption, lying at the bottom of our ſpirits? And *how ſtill abuſed* by the frequencies of our hearts Deceitfulneſs and Miſcarriages about it? The more *high*, *holy*, and conducing any Ordinance of Chriſt is, the more *fearful* and *ſad* are the Demonſtrations

ſtrations of the Enmity and Hell in our Hearts, acting againſt it. *Domine Gehenna ſum, Lord I am Hell*, ſaid that devout Meditator.

Ah what Floods, what Seas of Conſiderations have we need of, to quench theſe Helliſh ſparks that riſe up in our Boſoms? What need of all the Heavenly fire we can make and kindle, to extinguiſh this Helliſh Fire, that ſo quickly burns and flames up? As we ſee the Sun to extinguiſh the Fire on the Hearth: Celeſtial Fire our Culinary Fire.

This may ſuffice for the firſt thing, Meditation is an Ordinance of Chriſt.

To come to the Second, it is our Incumbent Duty, our Obedience to the great Law-giver Chriſt.

CHAP. III.

Meditation our Duty, our Obedience.

2. *Meditation our Duty.* MEditation is not only Chriſts Inſtitution and Ordinance, but every ones Incumbent Duty and Neceſſary Obedience: not like the Free-will Offering, a matter meerly arbitrary, and as a dealing by way of courteſie. Not for a Caſting in, as a Redundancy, over and above all other Duties, but is and muſt be performed as a Duty of indiſpenſible neceſſity, 1 *Tim.* 4. 15. *Pſal.* 1. 2.

1. *A Duty in reference to Chriſt.* Neceſſity in reference to Chriſt himſelf; an Obedience to his Law, a ſubjection to his *Crown Imperial*, an homage and ſervice

ſervice due to him, as the Sovereign Lord of our Souls, and of that Meditating and *pondering faculty* he endowed them with.

Meditation is Jeſus Chriſts *Reſervation* in the *great Gift* and *Grant* of our *Souls Thinking power.* He hath endowed us with that ſo *Noble Faculty* of minding and muſing, and alſo with a large *Mind-Charter*, and liberty of thoughts, for our own *occaſions* and ſober *Recreatings*, *in our Contemplations or Studies.* But yet, 'tis always provided, that *a holy Tribute*, out of *the whole of our thoughts*, is ſtill duly to be paid in, and that as *an acknowledgment both of holding our thinking faculty upon him*, (Rom. 11. 36.) *and our beſt way of employment of it*: and this to be *done*, *in the due ſeaſons*, *both Ordinary and Extraordinary.* The neglect of this Duty, is a *denying* of his Right and Royalty over my thoughts, and over that which is ſo *eminent* an Endowment of the Mind, and given in to the Spirit by God, for *its chiefly Thinking of him that is ſo High* and *All ſufficient*, and the *ſurpaſſing* excellent things of God, as being the Souls beſt acting. Certainly thus *the Saints* in the Scripture acted highly upon this account, of their paying in the *Reſerved dues* of Chriſt, their *Leige Lord*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. His Dues and their Duties moving ſtrongly, to act highly in this work and way.

2. Duty to my ſelf, and *my own Soul Concernments*, is another great Conſideration here.

In all, doing Duty, there's a doing my ſelf right, paying in to my own Soul its due. Neglecting in any kind my Duty, is a *wronging my own ſoul. Prov.* 8. 36. *He that ſins againſt me wrongs his own ſoul*: Performing it is a doing my Soul Right. Yea, holy

Duties

Duties are the *Higheſt doings of right* to our Souls. There's no way of doing better to my ſelf, than going in the King of Heavens High-way. His ways are my Souls *beſt ways*, wherein I act beſt for my ſelf, and when I perform them in the beſt manner.

This leads me to the next particular, the *Requiſites*, and the Ingredients of this Meditation conſidered as a holy Duty, which are theſe next following.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Requiſites in Meditation.

THere are theſe three things I ſhall mention, as the Requiſites for holy Meditation, as a Duty.

1. That I call a Foundation, or Preparative to it.

2. Thoſe things that are for the forming and framing it as to the parts and proportions.

3. The things that finiſh it up.

1. As to the Foundation or Preparative to it, This muſt be laid above in Heaven, by the Diſpoſitive or *Preparative* work of fervent Prayer. The foundation of this Soul Affair muſt be, as a *Learned man* ſaith of the Foundation of the World: The Foundation of the World, he ſaith, is the Third Heaven, which is of a *conſtant incorruptible Nature, of no pre-exiſtent principles, and ſo not liable, as other things are, to corruption and reſolution: and*

which

which as to the convex or outward ſuperficies, or the higheſt part, is only bounded or terminated by its own limits, or terms of Eſſence, and Quantity: but in its concave or hollow ſuperficies, or the loweſt part, contains all inferiour things, and is fixt immoveable. If the Foundation of the great World is laid by the Third Heaven, the Foundation of this great Work of holy Meditation muſt be laid in Heaven, laid by the Soul's ſtrong mounting up thither, and fixing it ſelf there by fervent Prayer, as the great Preparative to this Meditation. Fervent Prayer: The word in the Hebrew uſed for Meditation, שִׂיחַ which ſignifies alſo Prayer, Prayer and Meditation being ſo near a kin, and the one helping mutually the other.

1. To begin with a bringing the Soul into the *Glorious* and Tremendous Preſence of the Great God, and under his ſo pure and all-ſeeing Eye.

2. To act the Soul, and lay it as it were *aſteep* in ſelf-abaſings and humblings, for its former miſcarriages and failings in, and preſent unfitneſs and indiſpoſedneſs for, what is now undertaking.

3. To exerciſe *freſh Self-denyings*, as to any ſufficiency of ability to perform any thing herein acceptably and profitably.

4. To act *vigorous and ſtrong recumbencies* on Jeſus Chriſt, for his both *Teachings* and *Touchings* of our Spirits, and upholdings likewiſe in the work.

5. To *procure and beget a warm* temper in us, ſuch as may make the heart to *Glow* all the Duty over.

2. As to the forming of the Duty in the Parts and Particulars of it.

1. It muſt be bottom'd and riſe from the Spring and *Great Principle* of Motion and Action, which

is *the will*; in a both *free* choice, and firm purpose. A resolvedness, and rooted purpose: Thus *David Psal.* 119. 48. *I will meditate in thy Statutes*, and *verse* 15. *I will meditate in thy Precepts.* The evil heart saith, *I will not Meditate*: Satan saith (so far as he can hinder) *you shall not*: And the prophane World saith, *you need not.* But the holy heart saith, *I will Meditate.* This is my free and firm purpose, and nothing by Christs assistance shall divert me.

The Philosopher saith, that in every virtuous action there must be a *choice* of Will, it must be προαιρετικὸς, be Elective, come free from the Spring of the Will, and run in Resolution: otherwise it is not a virtuous Action.

The Scriptures, for all Religious Actings, call for Willingness; *Psal.* 110. 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy Power*; or as it is in the Hebrew, *A people of willingnesses, thy people*: And in divers places, call for Readiness in what we perform to God. No work in the World can challenge that intense degree and share of Readiness and Freeness, as Christs work, and such ways as have a clear and lively Stamp of his Royal Will and Command. No higher Character is given in Scripture of a *Real Godliness*, than freest Choice of Will and Readiness. *To Chuse the good part*, Luke 10. 42. *To Chuse the things that please God*, Isa. 56. 4. and as in abundance of places is to be seen.

A Carnal heart acts from *Carnal Wisdom*, and self-Interest, or from Passion and *self-biassing affection*, but not from *pure freeness* and deliberate Choice of Will. That is not the Spring and rise of his Duties, as it is in a good and holy heart. A

good

good heart acts from purpose, a *well* and *deep set* purpose: *Acts* 11. 23. *with purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord.* And *Psal.* 119. 106. *I have sworn and I will perform, &c.* So the Will, for holy Duties must put forth in *Purposes, firm* Purposes, *varieties* of fresh Purposes: Act *all the still needful* and conducing Purposes, any Duty in any respect calls for. There are many *Rare and Rich* Attendants and Properties, Ingredients and Excellencies, Divine and *Heavenly Beauties*, appertaining to holy Duties, which the Will must *intend* and make its *free firm* Choice of, which the purposes of the Will *must lye level* to and make after, as the proper and proportionate Marks and highet Tendencies.

CHAP. V.

Of the Purposes for this.

I Shall name Five Particulars for this. There must be,

1. An aim and firm Purpose to make the Duty a *Right Work*, to make sure it be made true.

2. A free and full Purpose of a *Wise Work*, to have it a Work of Spiritual Wisdom.

3. A firm purpose for a *vigorous* and *spirited* performing.

4. A strong purpose of watching and earnest striving against all *Diversions* and Interruptions.

5. In a firm purpose of *Utmost endeavour of success*, and having the Right and Kindly End and *Fruit* of the Duty.

1. A right Work.

1. The Wills purpoſe and intendment muſt be to make *the Duty* of Meditation a *Right Work*; to make ſure it be made true and and ſincere: *John* 4. 24. Not a *Carcaſe*, a *Painted* piece, without Soul and Subſtance, a Formality without Power. Not a meer work performed, as it were to flatter God, who looks for a Duty, *As they in* Pſal. 78. 86. *are ſaid to flatter God with their lips, but their heart was not right with him.* We are ready to flatter him (inſtead of Realities) with our *Modes of Meditation, and Faſhions of Thinkings, with our Formalities*, without Realities and Truth, and the work's being ſincere. It muſt not be a *flattering* of God, but a true pleaſing him, from *being true* it ſelf: It muſt not be a work dawbed over with the *untempered Mortar* of our own hearts ſelf-deceitfulneſs, ſetting up a thing *to ſhew like* it, and be ſomething near it only, and putting thereby a *Cheat* upon our ſelves. Nor make it a thing *only to ſtop* the mouth of our Conſciences, keep them from calling on and challenging of us; but to deſign it ſtrongly and firmly, *to purpoſe*, through God, to proffer to and pleaſe him with a ſincere Work: *Gen.* 17. 1. *Walk before me, and be ſincere*: This muſt be underſtood, certainly, of every Walk and Path we go in: Not a walk in ſome one way, or divers, and not all; but in every walking, ſincerity muſt be a Property, a Qualification deſign'd, and firmly reſolv'd: and we muſt not be ſatisfied unleſs it be Right Meditating, ſuch as Scripture requires, and Saints in Scripture practiſed; *yea that they told God himſelf* that they performed, *Pſ.* 119. 23. And doubtleſs *David* durſt not tell the *Heart-ſearching* God, he Meditated, if he had done it formally and hypocritically, and not been ſincere and upright in it.

Again,

Again, It must be a wise work.

2. The Intendment of the Will, must be for making this Duty a *Wise Work*, to make it a Work of *Spiritual Wisdom*: The Apostle, *Ephes.* 5. 15. says, *Be not fools but wise, understanding what the will of the Lord is.* And 2 *Tim.* 3. 14. there's mention of *wisdom to salvation*: And *Prov.* 9. 12. *Wisdom is called on for our selves.*

1. *Wise in respect of God.* Certainly, as *Solomon* did things of great Excellency to shew himself very wise; so when the most High God's Honour is concern'd, and when he will be present at our Performances, and comes as it were purposely to them, shall we present him with any *foolish piece*; not design a wise work, and be seen acting wisely?

2. *Wise in reference to our selves.* Should we not also *strongly purpose* to make this Duty a *Wise Work*, a Work of sure Wisdom *for our selves*, and lay it fully level to the grand mark of Eternal Salvation for our selves? *Solomon, Prov.* 17. 21. saith, *The Father of a Fool shall have no joy*: so the Parent of a foolish acting, will have no joy: It is the *Godly prudent* acting, whose Fruit is Peace, and which issues in Heavenly joy. O how sweet and comfortable is that Duty, in which we have acted up to the Rule of *sound Wisdom*! This is the Second Particular, a Duty must be Purposed and Intended to be a Wise Work.

3. *A spirited and lively work.* There must be a *firm* and *strong* Purpose and Intendment for a vigorous and spirited, a *lively* and *warm* Work. *Rom.* 12. 11. *Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.* In every Duty we must have a Purpose of *striking fire*, of making the heart burning hot: It must not be *luke-warm*, in an indifferency, that's but lazy; nor *Blood-warm*,

that's *but low*. But the Souls Purpoſe and Deſign muſt be for *higheſt heat* and fervency, greateſt vigour and activity. As *Artiſts* in ſome *High Operations*, endeavours the hotteſt Fire.

As warmeſt Preaching and warmeſt Hearing, as the Diſciples *hearts burned within them*, when Chriſt opened the Scriptures, *Luke* 24. 32. And ſo warmeſt Reading, and warmeſt *Meditating*. *David's heart, while he muſed, the fire burned, Pſal.* 39. 3. So when we Meditate, we ſhould intend a warm work, to be very warm at the heart.

4. *A ſtriving againſt all lets*. In a ſtrong purpoſe of earneſt ſtriving *againſt all lets and interruptions*. The whole work of a Chriſtian here, muſt not only be vigorous and *ſedulous*, but ſtriving and contentious. *Luke* 13. 24. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate*. Every ſingle and particular Duty muſt *bear a part of ſtriving* to enter in at the ſtrait Gate: For this is to be applied to every particular Duty, though Chriſt ſpeaks *only* in General, bidding us ſtrive.

Two things *make up the Notion* of ſtriving.

1. Firſt *Intenſion* and Earneſtneſs.

2. Secondly *Contention* againſt Oppoſition. When a man ſtrives, he acts earneſtly: and when *he ſtrives after* or for a thing, he ſtrives alſo with that which is againſt him. Striving is againſt ſomething, that letts or oppoſes: In all Soul-work, and peculiarly in this of Meditation, the *throng of Difficulties* is great, the *Oppoſitions* are many, therefore the purpoſes and *Reſolutions* of heart muſt be *ſtrong and high*. None ever carry on their work well, *Who are not firſt well reſolved, and ſtill renew and link one firm purpoſe to another, to hold on their courſe to the laſt*.

5. *A purpose for the kindly issuing of Meditation.* The Will must *purpose firmly*, to endeavour still the *kindly issue* and *success of the Duty*. *Look*, saith the Apostle, *John* 2. 8. *ye lose not the things wrought*: who would set up at the *Labour in Vain*? Christ's sweet Promise is, *Isa.* 65. 23. *The seed of the blessed of the Lord shall not labour in vain.* The way among others, of having it performed, is by grounding our endeavours in strong and *rooted Resolutions*, for that running and pressing on, and looking after our Duties doing; until the work winds up, and issues in the spiritual ends, in the sweet success it is appointed unto: such as encrease of Holiness and Grace, and improvement of Communion with God. *Finis Coronat Opus: Success sets the Crown on the head of the Work*: Resolve to get the Crown still set on the Head of every Duty, that it *shines* in the glory of success.

These are the five special Branches, this Root of Resolution should put forth; these, as so many *precious corner-Stones*, should lye *at the Bottom* of this Building, the better to bear it up.

These should be, as *so many great Arteries* branching forth from the *Heart*, to convey *vital spirits* into the body of this heavenly Duty of Meditation, and keep it alive, and warm and *improvingly active*.

CHAP. VI.

Of the proper Objects of Divine Meditation.

FRom things of a remoter relation to the ſubject in hand, I *paſs to ſuch* as are the nearer, the more intrinſical and peculiar. And here comes firſt to be handled, the *Matter*, or the Object of this Meditation. When the wiſe King *Solomon* was to build the Temple, firſt he is providing the rich and precious Materials, then he proceeds to the framing and fitting of them, and then to erecting and finiſhing that glorious Structure. That which next is to be done, is firſt to look out the Materials of our work, and then the framing and finiſhing up, is to follow: The Materials, or objective parts, are far more rich and precious than thoſe of *Solomon's* Temple. They are, as our Deſcription of Meditation holds them forth, either

1. Such as are more *properly* and purely ſpiritual and heavenly in their own Nature.

2. Or things conſidered, in a *Spiritual way*, and to a Spiritual end and uſe.

It is *not the Conſideration* of things as to their *Entity* or *Being*, that is *Metaphyſical*: *Metaphyſicks* treat of *Entities*, of the meer Beings of things. Of the firſt Being, namely God; and of ſecondary Beings derived from God the firſt Being. It is not the *Conſideration* of things as *Rational*; the Rational reſpects things have one to another, this is *Logical*: *Logick*, that conſiders reſpects of things, as *Cauſes*,

Cauſes, Effects, Subjects, Adjuncts, and the like.

It is not the Conſideration of things in their particular *Natures*, and *Natural properties*: This, *Natural Philoſophy* Contemplates.

It is not the Conſideration of things *Civil*, *Moral*, or *Political*: theſe, *Moraliſts* and *States-men* are exerciſed about.

Neither is it the conſideration of particular *Crafts* and *Trades*: this is *Mechanical*, and but a work prudential, and *Humane*, not Divine. But this Meditation hath Objects of a far higher Sphere and Rank; things of a Divine and Theological Conſideration.

Nay, nor yet is it the *meer Study* of things Theological and Divine. A man may be a Student *in Divinity, beat and buſie his Brains, about the high points and Myſteries in it*, may read and muſe on Matters Divine, and *yet not be a Meditator*, ſuch as we ſpeak of, not *act Divine Meditation*. A man may *act upon things* as Notions, and as *matters* of Knowledge; or to make up an Univerſal knowing perſon, he may *act Contemplation* for *Curioſity*: for ſuch an uſe, as the *Heathen man* Ariſtotle *made* of reading *Moſes* his firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*; whereof he paſſed his undue and heathenish cenſure, that *Moſes* affirms all, but proves nothing; he read firſt, and then pondered; and then cenſured. But he acted *not Meditation*, not that we ſpeak of: It was *not a conſideration* of ſpiritual things as ſpiritual, and for ſpiritual ends; but only as a wiſe man *acts his thoughts*, upon things as *New*, for *New notions*, and improving Knowledge. Many thus conſider things Scriptural and Divine, ſtudy them, as we call it, ſtudy Books of Divinity, ſtudy *things* in the Scripture; but they

act

act not *the Duty of Meditation*. They act upon things as *Matters Intellectual* and Rational, not as Heavenly and Spiritual. Act for *Notion* and *Speculation*, and not for Holineſs. *Act Curioſity, not Chriſtianity.*

The right Meditater far tranſcends any meer Student, he acts a *more* Noble part, hath a *more Noble* and ſublime manner of Operation. *Ariſtotles ſtudying* Moſes *Writings*, and *David*'s *Meditating in the Law of God*, how far do they differ? So a *Heathen*'s or a *Mahometan*'s, or a *Jew*'s, or any ſuch perſons ſtudying matters in the Bible, differs greatly from Meditating in it.

Nay, *many Proteſtants* are great Students in Divinity, *that never Meditated*: they dwell upon the ſtudy of it, but touch not with the *leaſt* of their fingers the hard work of holy Meditation.

But to return to our matter in hand, and to ſpeak to this ſubject of Meditation: Formerly it was ſaid, that Spiritual things, or things in a Spiritual and *Heavenly manner* conſidered, are the proper and adequate Object of this Meditation.

And *here, O how large* and fair a proſpect hath the Spiritual Eye to Expatiate and Recreate it ſelf in! The *Infinitely Glorious* and All-ſufficient God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as the Scripture reveals: The *vaſt world*, the frame of Heaven above, and Earth below, with all the ſo innumerable things contained in them.

Their *ſundry Natures, Properties and Uſes*, with the ſo beauteous and various Excellencies of them. The *mighty Suſtentations* and Preſervations of all things Created, as to their *Beings*, their *Faculties*, and their *Acts*.

The

The moſt wiſe, *righteous, and holy* Governing of them, with a moſt ſteady and never erring hand unto their particular ends; and with a moſt certain winding them all up ultimately, in the *Supreme ſcope* of the great Creator and Governour.

Then that peculiar Government of the rational *Creatures, Angels,* and *Men*: The unſpeakably *ſad fall* of ſome Angels, and *all Mankind.* The *Recovery* of ſome men, and their Eternal Salvation, by Chriſt the Redeemer, God in our Nature: Here, here is matter of Meditation, *The great myſtery of Godlineſs,* as 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. And particularly, the *four laſt things,* as they are called, *namely Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.*

Beſides, there is for Meditation, the whole *Book of holy Scriptures*, now compleat in the New Teſtament-times: with the Ordinances of Chriſt, and *the Covenant of Grace.* And laſtly, the Meditation of that ſo great concern, *our own particular Eſtates,* how matters ſtand with us, and are like to be with us to all *Eternity*; *which Eternity* challenges and impoſes on every perſon, the greateſt both intenſions and frequencies of thoughts. But though this be ſo great; *yet again* what is there in all the vaſt circumference of the whole world? I ſay, what is there, *although never ſo ſmall,* but by a wiſe and holy heart may be an Object improvable to an excellent uſe and end? As the Art of *Chymiſtry* can extract rare and *efficacious* Remedies, out of Dungs, Putrefactions, and Poyſons.

That Soul muſt be a *pitiful, vain,* and barren piece, that *wants matter and mind* to move and act fruitfully, in ſo large a ſphere and compaſs as Meditation hath: It affords the *whole latitude* of all things pro-

properly ſpiritual: And it *compriſes* likewiſe all other things, which, in ſome reſpect or other, wiſdom can improve by this rare Art.

No Artiſt in any way of Operation, with all his rare Inſtruments, and efficacious Engines, can operate more *eminently* than an Artiſt in this holy kind may do.

Of this the Scriptures give *plentiful proof* in the many Precedents left us in it for imitation. So we ſee it in *holy David*, in many of his Pſalms (beſides them of the Word of God, his greateſt Subject of Meditation, in thoſe *made of God's great works*) yea the *works of his common* Providence and Guidance; as the *growing* of the Graſs, and Herbs, and Trees; the *ſinging* of the Birds among their Branches; in *the waters*, the playing of the *Leviathan*, the *innumerable* creeping things in the Seas, and *the going* of the Ships in them, as *Pſal.* 104. The wiſe *Solomon* hath his Meditation of the *Horſe-leach*, with her daughters, *Prov.* 30. 15. The *Ant in her Induſtry*, *Prov.* 26. 14. ſending the Sluggard (that turns on his Bed, as the Door on the Hinges, that often moves, but never removes,) to her to learn Induſtry, *Prov.* 6. 6.

Yea ſometimes, the *moſt inconſiderable* things the Scripture takes notice of, for us to mind the *Hairs on the head*, which all are numbred; the *Sands* of the Sea, which though ſo weak and ſmall, is thereby bridled. The *Duſt of the* Earth, by Gods power, as in a Meaſure comprehended, *Iſa.* 40. 12. And not only God's great works and high actings, but the *loweſt actions of men*, and the meaneſt actings of the inferiour Creatures, are in Scripture held forth, as occaſions for this Meditation, as advantage grounds for

for the aſcending of thoughts, and raiſing up the Mind Heaven-ward.

All this pains taken by the Spirit of God, in the Scriptures, is *to ſhew what a wiſe and fruitful ſpirit may extract*, by this holy Art of Meditation; yea, to teach us how *conſtantly thought-buſie* we ſhould keep our hearts (like that wonder in Nature, the ſo wiſe and laborious Bee) ſtill in gathering ſome Celeſtial ſweetneſs from every Flower of Scripture or Providence, or any other Object we ſtay upon.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Requiſites for Meditation.

FRom the Object and Matter of Meditation, we muſt next come upon the Requiſites and Qualifications, and the things contained in it, and conſtituting of it.

Here by the way, there were *two ſorts* of Meditation mentioned.

1. That *which is ſet* and more ſolemn.
2. That *which is ſhort, ſudden*, and ejaculatory.

1. The firſt that, which *more properly* is called Meditation, is that ſo frequently we have ſpoken of in the Scripture, and mentioned in our Divinity-Books, and in Diſcourſes. Meditation in the ordinary acceptation of the word, taken for a *work of time, ſeriouſneſs* and ſolemneſs, that muſt have *a due proportion* of Time, Labour, and Diligence, *to effect that upon* the heart, it is to be uſed for.

2. There is that *which is called Ejaculation*, ſud-

den

den quick acting, or aſcending of the Soul to Heaven. This is a *holy ſpark*, flies up out of the heavenly Fire, burning ſuddenly in the heart, this is but Meditation rather more improperly ſo call'd. Of this I ſhall ſpeak ſomething hereafter.

But that we are now to proceed upon, is the Meditation *more properly* ſo call'd, more ſet, ſolemn Meditation, a buſineſs of time and ſerioufneſs.

There are divers things, I ſhall mention eight Particulars, or Requiſites for this Meditation. There are eight Requiſites I ſhall mention.

1. There's requiſite a *Holy Awe* and Reverence, a putting on a reverential frame of heart ſutable to the holineſs of the Duty.

2. There is requiſite a *Retreat of the Thoughts*, calling off the mind from all its preceding excurſions or engagings otherways.

3. There's requiſite, the ſetting *of a ſtrong Guard*, and ſo ſure a Watch upon our ſlippery ſpirits as we are able, to ſecure it againſt all diverſions.

4. Meditation, as to the Form and Nature, proper Notion and Eſſence, conſiſts *in Application* of the Mind and Thoughts, and ſetting them upon the Subject or Matter intended to be conſidered.

5. Meditation, as to the Nature and Eſſence, conſiſts, as in Application of the Mind to, ſo *in the intenſion* and *due ſerioufneſs* of thinkings on a fit Object.

6. In a *diving and ſearching* of thoughts, ſcanning for a beſt diſcovery.

7. In a *Commoration* and due ſtay of the thoughts upon the work in hand, without precipitation and undue haſtening.

8. It's

8. It's requiſite there be an infuſing and intermixing the *life and beauties of ſuch affections* as are ſutable and proper for the Duty.

1. Meditation it muſt have the Diſpoſitive and Preparation of *Holy Awe and Reverence*; a ſtill engaging the Spirit to, and impoſing upon it, and framing of it, unto all that holy Awe, and higheſt Reverence, which this ſo excellent Duty calls for, both in the Entrance, and over all the Performance. I ſay Higheſt Reverence, as that which is to be done in the ſo *infinitely pure* preſence of a God; a God whoſe eye is obſerving in a ſpecial manner our heart-temper, not only in a Duty performed in his view, but a temper preſented and tendered to himſelf, *as an Homage* and Honour. As a way of *Ingratiating* our ſelves with him, as a way, and one of our ſweeteſt ways of higher Intimacy and Communion with him.

The Spirit of a Creature perfect, much leſs of a ſinner, it *cannot have too ſtrong an Infuſion, too deep a Tincture of holy* Reverence.

This is the firſt Requiſite, a deep Tincture of holy Reverence contended to.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the ſecond Requiſite.

THE next Requiſite is *in ſounding a Retreat of the Thoughts*, and calling off the Mind from all preingagements, not only Evils and Vanities, but all Buſineſs and Duties. Nothing muſt detain the thoughts, or divert the thoughts, when we deſign and *intend* Meditation. God complains of men when Bodies are brought, and Hearts are left out: well may he complain, *if we go about Meditation, a Mind, a Thought Exerciſe, if we let the mind and thoughts be ſent abroad, and not called home.*

The Philoſophers ſay truly, *that intention can be only of one thing at one particular individual time.* Divinity tells us, there muſt be no allowance *of diſintention*, neither a giving way to a ſeiſure of Impertinencies to keep poſſeſſion of the Mind; that will keep off that which is incumbent, and our preſent Duty.

David, *Pſal.* 119. 113. ſays, *he hated vain thoughts, when they were Intruders*, when they crowded in: much more as they were *Excluders*, and crowded out good thoughts. Therefore *moſt of all*, when they obſtructed and interpoſed at the time of his Meditation. Therefore being ſo rare an Artiſt in Heavenly Meditation, he ſtill would ſhake out and empty the Veſſel of his heart of other previous improper thoughts. Do, as *Nehemiah*, when *Tobijah* had laid up his ſtuff in the Temple, *he throws it all out* to make way for the proper Furniture.

Muſing

Muſing in this ſort therefore muſt have its Preparative, its ſtand, and its retreat off and from all impertinent thoughts: a making the Coaſt clear, a ſetting the mind free, disburdening and diſclogging it: Caſting off all weights when we are to run this Race, and mount up the *Hill of Divine Contemplation.* Now is the time, to *call to by-thoughts to void the Room*, and leave it free for other thoughts to enter.

This is the Second Requiſite, a ſounding a *Retreat* to the thoughts from all other things.

3. When Meditation is to be performed, there muſt be a *ſtrong Guard ſet*, a ſure Watch kept upon all Avenues and Paſſages, on all the Inlets and Outlets of the heart.

As *Jehoiada* the Prieſt ſet a Guard round about *the young King*, when he was to be Crowned, 2 *Chr.* 23. 7. ſo *when this Duty* is endangered, and ready to be hindred from having the Crown of a *right performance* ſet upon it. The Scripture Rules impoſe Circumſpection, great Caution in all our Concernments, but more peculiarly in things pertaining to God, and his Worſhip, *Eccleſ.* 5. 1. *Take heed to thy foot, &c.* ſo *Take heed what you hear.* Aud *Take heed how you hear.* So there muſt be heed, and a great take heed how we Meditate. The ſtrongeſt Guard is little enough, yea too deficient and weak, for *the holieſt heart*, and the *beſt exerciſed* in this part of Godlineſs. O how inconceivably evil is every heart in its *leakings* and runnings out, in its rovings and wandrings, in its *ſlipperineſs* and inconſtancies, and likewiſe in its ſinkings and fallings, inſtead of keepings up in its heat and heavenly vivacity, and keepings on in any evenneſs and equality.

No *Sieve is more unapt* to hold water, no *hand more* unable to hold Sand, or Oyl poured into it, no *bone*, which often hath been out of joint, is more apt to diſlocate and ſlip out of place, than is the beſt heart to ſlip off, rove, and range from this Duty, in Diverſions and Admiſſions of Impertinencies. When we are moſt ſerious and intent, ſuddenly our carnal Spirits give us the ſlip, and are gone: *Like the Bird* if the Cage be but open: Or, *the Priſoner* if the Doors be not faſt and watcht. Or, if the heart get not out in Diverſions, it falls flat in Deadneſs and ſudden Coolings: *Like the Iron* in forging, no longer hot, than the Workman keeps blowing: like melted Metal, which cools as it runs and is pouring forth.

This made *David* in the *Pſalms*, ſo often and earneſtly to call for *Quicknings*, from the ſenſe of his frequent heart-coolings and ſinkings.

The Acting of Meditation muſt not be going up *a Hill of Ice*, where footing is both ſlippery and cold, but like the going up the *Burning Mount Etna*, where the footing if not firm, yet is that which the Travellers (as they ſay) feel warm: Or like *Moſes*, *Going up the Mount to God*, which was ſteady and earneſt till he came to the top: Still a due *Guard* muſt be kept about our hearts in this *ſo important* ſoul affair. An *Intenſe care* muſt be uſed, and a holy fear againſt *all Diverſions*, all *heart-ſinkings*, and againſt all *Diſappointments* alſo; that we loſe not the real benefit and comfort of this work.

Theſe three now Explained Particulars, are as Requiſites or Attendants of Meditation: The *next four*, are the ſpecial things, wherein the Nature and Notion of it conſiſts.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Meditation in applying the Mind to a proper Object.

4. MEditation ſtands in an *Application*, and bringing the *thinking power* of the Soul upon the Object, or Thing to be Meditated of. Taking that *Great Engine* of the Spirit, and ſetting it to act upon ſome *fit ſubject*.

The thinking faculty, is a *rare Endowment*; an Engine whereby the reaſonable Creature can draw up and take in any Object, and act or exerciſe it ſelf about it, for that uſe or end we aim at in our thinking.

In *all Meditation*, there muſt be an Applying and Conjunction of the mind and the thing. As *Senſitive ſeeing*, muſt have ſome union, *virtual union*, with the thing ſeen: ſo *Intellectual ſeeing*, ſeeing by the *Eye* of the underſtanding, muſt be, by a bringing the thoughts upon that is to be thought upon. The Scripture hath this Expreſſion, of *ſetting the heart upon a thing*, *Hag.* 1. 5. So it is in the Hebrew, that which we Tranſlate Conſider your ways, is, *put or ſet your hearts upon, &c.* In Conſideration or Muſing there's not only a taking of the heart and thoughts from *foregoing* minded Objects; but a putting or *ſetting* it on ſome New thing, ſetting that on there where it was not ſet before.

The ſinful heart of it ſelf will run any way; upon *Earthly* things, upon *evil things*, or upon *Impertinent* and unſeaſonable things; not come to, *or keep*

upon that it ſhould intend and mind: Therefore it muſt be *taken as by ſtrong hand*, and ſet upon ſpiritual things, ſet on Muſing and Meditation of heavenly things. A carnal heart is like the *Loadſtone*, it cleaves to nothing *but Steel or Iron*, and both of them eaſily unite: but the heart muſt be of another property, and act in a higher way. And a good heart, though it thinks too much *Earth-ward*, runs often wrong; yet it will *ſet it ſelf in its thinkings* right, on right Objects, make it ſelf and them to meet and unite. *Pſal.* 119. 112. *David* tells us, how he did, he *inclined his heart to Gods Commandments*, both to keep them, and to meditate on them. He took and *bent his heart*, as a thing bending too much to other things; ſet his mind on Muſing on it. He found his *Heart and the Law* of God too far aſunder, and ſo *would continue*, unleſs he brought them together and made them one. If he had not *brought his heart* to the Word, he had never Meditated: The Object *cannot* apply it ſelf to the Mind, but the Mind muſt *bring it ſelf* to the Object. No *Holy Duties* will come to us, we muſt come to them. Many in a *ſecret folly* and *ſluggiſhneſs*, would have things do alone of themſelves, without their ſtirring or acting: but they miſtake, 'tis ſomething like to *Mahomet* the *Deceiver*, who once told the People that were met by his means, to ſee him have a Mountain, upon his call, to remove and come unto him: but when the Mountain would not come, he boldly then tells them, if the Mountain will not come to *Mahomet*, *Mahomet* muſt or will go to the Mountain. What he did attempt in pretence, and act in impudence, but was fain to go at laſt to the Mountain, that would not come to him: I ſay, like to this we are ready to do

do in ſlothfulneſs, we look that *Duties ſhould come to us*, that they *do* themſelves, and *we do* nothing: But that which will not come to us, we muſt go to it: We muſt bring and ſet our hearts to this and all other Duties. There muſt not be a letting the *Mind lie ſtill*; that ſo matter of Meditation may come to us, and make us Meditate: But we muſt bring and ſet our hearts to Objects of Meditation, and make this *Happy meeting*, of *Excellent Objects*, and this *excellent Muſing power*. This is the *more* to be Contended for, in that this work of Holy Meditating *hath ſo many buſie Adverſaries*, but *chiefly* in the conſtant progreſs and carrying of it on.

Ah 'tis *extreamly againſt* the grain of a natural heart, to be *broken off* from its cuſtomary wildneſs, wandrings, and rangings of thoughts.

To *cage up it ſelf*, and *become tame and tuned* to ſerious Muſings and Thinkings Heaven-ward. In the beſt heart, *that ſin that ſo eaſily beſets us*, it will be ready *quickly to interpoſe*, and cut off the Paſſages, otherwiſe open.

O how the heart *ſtrives to beſet and block up all* Paſſages, when we are beginning to enter on this Work! All the *whole Garriſon* of *diſ-inclinations* and *repugnancies*, the Helliſh heart, venoms, and contrarieties take inſtantly the *Alarm*, and endeavour to hinder the hearts conjunction with ſpiritual Objects by this Meditation. The Soul under its *Complications* of Luſts and Corruptions, is as if you had a *Bowl* of many *Biaſſes* clapt upon it, all ready to draw diverſly, but all from the *Duty* in hand: And as Natural Corruptions will be acting Contrarieties and Diverſions; ſo old *Cuſtomary Evils*, *haunts* and *wonts* will be *calling upon us*, coming to give us

their viſits, calling us off to ſome other way.

Satan alſo, and the Power of darkneſs will not be abſent at this time, that may turn ſo much to his prejudice, but he will be ſure (if he any way can) to *divert thee totally*, and cauſe the whole current of thy thoughts to run out in uſeleſs *Impertinencies*.

Great *Circumſpection* muſt therefore be ſtill uſed in our ſettings upon this Duty: A work *well begun is half done*. This is the Fourth Requiſite, the bringing the Heart and a Spiritual Object to meet, and be brought to the Eye of Conſideration.

CHAP. X.

Meditation in a ſerious Thinking.

5. MEditation includes, as an Application, ſo *an intenſion* and *ſeriouſneſs* of thoughts.

Serious Objects, and ſerious work, *muſt have thought-ſeriouſneſs*: an earneſtneſs, and acting the *vigour* of the thinking power. We can *think ſlightly*, but this *we call not* Meditation; but *ſerious* and *earneſt minding* muſt be ever an ingredient of due performed Meditating.

In Scripture it is ſometimes expreſt by the term of *Conſidering*. *Pſal.* 119. 95. *I will conſider thy Teſtimonies*: That is, mind them with a ſerious and earneſt thinking. So *Pſal.* 77. 5. *I conſidered the years of old*; he acted in not a ſlight Eying, but ſerious Muſing.

Thus *Solomon* in his *Eccleſiaſtes*, often expreſſes it, by the *term Conſidering*; *Eccl.* 4. 1. *I Conſidered all the*

the Oppreſſions under the Sun: And *v.* the 4. *I Conſidered all Travel.* Conſideration (beſides the bringing of the Mind unto a thing) includes alſo ſerioufneſs, *an intenſion* of the Mind upon the Object. Sometimes in Scripture it is expreſt by the word *Pondering*, *Prov.* 4. 26. *Ponder the paths of thy feet*: That is, earneſtly mind them. So *Luke* 2. 19. *Mary is ſaid to ponder the ſayings of Chriſt in her heart*; ſhe made it a work of great ſeriouſneſs.

There is a *ſlight and eaſie thinking*, an acting of thoughts curſorily, and when a thing is out *ſo ſoon as in*; and the *thought off* ſo *ſoon as on*: and there is a ſerious thinking.

The Mind of man hath not only an ability to act, but can put forth *an exceeding great ſeriouſneſs*. That as in things Natural they have not only power to act, but can alſo act *intenſly* and vigorouſly.

Thus in things *Inanimate*, as in Fire, how hot and intenſe may it be? *In brute Creatures*, how earneſtly can they act, when they put forth their ſtrength? As the *Horſe* in running, the *Eagle* in flying. In things *Artificial*, to what intenſe degrees can *divers Inſtruments* and Engines operate, and diſcharge themſelves? O what can this *Engine* of the Mind of man effect? what *heights* of ſeriouſneſs can it arrive at? What *contributions of earneſtneſs* can it pay in, when it is highly concern'd, when it is *edged* by ſome real or ſuppoſed grand intereſt; as ſome *weighty* Affair, urgent Buſineſs, ſome imminent Danger to be eſcaped, ſome rare Pleaſure, high Preferment, vaſt ſum of Treaſure, or ſuch like Engagements? Yea what can the Mind, as to *a high ſeriouſneſs*, act ſometimes upon Objects *totally unworthy* of the thoughts? *vain thoughts can be very eager and intenſe.*

If we can be ſo ſerious in matters inferiour, *certainly Divine and Spiritual* matters muſt needs claim a *far greater* ſhare of ſerioufneſs. There ſhould be *no earneſtneſs* of thoughts on any ground or intereſt whatſoever, like to this *Meditating Earneſtneſs*.

There are *ſeveral ſpheres* of ſerioufneſs of thoughts which we may obſerve men move in; Steps and Aſcents of Serioufneſs.

1. *Country-men*, in their lower ways, have their *plodding ſerioufneſs*; how earneſt do divers of them appear in minding of their Occaſions, which *they* account great?

2. *Citizens*, in their *higher ways*, have their higher and more *improved ſerioufneſs*. O what are the various earneſtneſſes, how ſtrange and amazing to conſider, are the *daily beatings of Brains*, and intendings of Thoughts, on daily occaſions by multitudes of perſons in *a vaſt City?*

3. *Students and Scholars*, in their ingenious ways, what *intenſe* and earneſt Muſings do many of them *habit themſelves to*; and what improved Heightnings of the ways of ſtudying do they contend unto? *The higheſt ſerioufneſs makes the beſt Scholar.*

4. *Stateſmen* and *Souldiers*, what ſerioufneſs do their *Grand and Important* Affairs for the Publick (that lies at the ſtake to be preſerved and advanced) engage and draw forth? *How great* is the great Politicians ſerioufneſs about his Deſigns?

5. *Debauchery and Vice* hath its ſinful ſerioufneſs. Senſuality, Uncleanneſs, *contemplative Fornication* hath in all *Places* and Ages *given higheſt* evidence of unparallel'd ſerioufneſs: what ever hath raiſed and *wound up* the ſerioufneſs more; as *in amorous Poetry* and *wanton Romances*, and ſuch like filthy writings

writings appears? All *ſorts of Vices* and Luſts, the *lower* they lie in the ſink of the ſinful heart, the *higher* they act, in ſaddeſt ſerioufneſs and ſtudyings for carnal ſatisfaction.

6. The *Black Train of Hell* and Devils, have their unſpeakable heights of Serioufneſs and Muſings for Souls-deſtroyings.

But whatever Spheres and Heights of ſerioufneſs there can be, ſpiritual things of Right, muſt challenge of every Chriſtian, a far other and better ſerioufneſs.

The *perfect Rule* of Religion obliges Chriſtians to *out-do* all others in their greateſt ſerioufneſs.

7. Doubtleſs *the Saints* in all Ages have excell'd in this kind. In their Retirements and happy Engagements between Chriſt and their Souls.

Such as *Enoch*, *who walkt with God*, ſuch as the other holy Patriarchs, ſuch as *Job*, and other eminent ones. And peculiarly *David*, that *ſo rare* Artiſt in this way: What may we alſo ſay of the *Holy Prophets*, *bleſſed Apoſtles*, *glorious Confeſſors* and *Martyrs*, and the *eminent* Saints and excellent Lights of the Church? theſe no doubt have been *highly* ſerious, in their Heavenly Meditations.

Certainly the *rare Artiſts* of the World, neither *Apelles* in Painting, nor *Phydias* in Carving, nor *Dedalus* in *Contriving* the Labyrinth at *Creet*, nor *Archimedes* in *deviſing* his Mathematical Inſtruments, nor *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, or any of the great *Philoſophers* did arrive at greater ſerioufneſs in ſtudy, than the Worthies of Chriſt in the paſſages mentioned before, neither than that ſerioufneſs of ſuch as lived after the Apoſtles; as holy *Ignatius*, *Cyprian*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Ambroſe*, *Auſtin*, and others of the Ancients,

rare

rare men in Contemplation: And ſuch as *not only* the Bleſſed Reformers abroad, *Luther*, *Melanchon*, *Bucer*, *Martyr*, *Calvin*, *Zanchy*, and others of them were, but *ſuch of our own Martyrs*, holy *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, *Bradford*, and the reſt of that glorious Army; and as many after them, in the ſeveral parts of theſe Nations; *one* of which would ſay, *he thanked God, that for twenty years together he had ſtudied nothing but the Bible and his own heart.* I believe none of thoſe *Philoſophers* and *Artiſts* ever acted any *ſeriouſneſs* to that height and ſweetneſs, that the holy ones of Chriſt have done.

But it is time to come now to the next thing.

CHAP. XI.

Meditation in a ſearching and ſcanning.

6. THis Meditation, beſides Application of the Mind to the Object, and intenſion or ſeriouſneſs on it, includes *a ſearching and ſcanning*, or diving deep, an *extenſion* of thoughts, a looking about or endeavour *of Comprehenſiveneſs*, in reſpect of the Object, ſo far as we can. To make *as perfect* and full a view of it, and to ſee into the *Dimenſions* and Extents of that we think on. Thus when a man ſtudies a thing, *He endeavours an Extenſive* and a *Comprehenſive* ſeeing, and having the fulleſt view. He ſets it not *before* him to ſee a little, but the *moſt* he can.

The Scripture phraſe I cited of *Proverbs* 4. 26. and that of *Luke* 2. 29. of *Pondering*, includes this par-

particular likewiſe we now are to treat of. In pondering there is both *firſt* the Minds applying it ſelf to a thing, and the *intending* its acting, and then this *third* of an acting, of ſearching and diving into it, or knowing what we can of it.

Pondering is an *Expreſſion taken from Goldſmiths*, and Tradeſmen, that deſire to know the full *weight* of a thing, and thereby the value *or worth* for their profit and uſe: Thus the Merchant weighs his Merchandiſe, the Goldſmith weighs his Silver and Gold, the Jeweller weighs his rich Pearls, Rubies, and Diamonds, to know them more exactly. There is exceeding *great weight and worth* in Heavenly and Spiritual things: Meditation muſt hold *the ſcales*, to weigh, *ſo well as* we can, theſe ſo rich and precious things, theſe Diamonds, and Pearls of Heavenly Treaſure: yea weigh them as things that unſpeakably ſurmount all other things. As *Prov.* 2. 4. *Wiſdom muſt have a ſearching for, as for hid Treaſures:* as the ſearching *for*, and ſearching *in* the Gold and Silver Mines; in which there is *not only* great earneſtneſs of ſearch, till the *Rich Vein* is diſcovered, but being once found, there is a *following it* with exacteſt *Induſtry*, and utmoſt *Curioſity*, to find not a *part* or *quantity* of the Treaſure, but *all* the Riches ſcattered over the whole Mine, part after part. A Chriſtian in his Exerciſe of Meditation, muſt act the part of the *Exquiſite Miner*, to dig deep, dig over all the Mine, and gather up the Riches of it, the leſſer and greater quantities, as they come to view, in the Mines of Spiritual Treaſure. *Travellers* tell us, that in the *Perſian* Gulf at a certain ſeaſon of the Year, great ſtore of a kind of *Shell-fiſh* is to be found near the ſhore, in which Shell-fiſh they find the

the *precious Pearls* bred in their Shells: But the way of finding them is by *Diving*, there are men that have an *Art of Diving* down to the bottom of the Sea, and bringing up their Baskets fill'd with these Shell-fish; the Shells being opened, they find and take out the *Orient and Rich Pearls*, of several proportions, some of them very great and rich; whereby they greatly enrich themselves and those that deal in them. Meditation is the Spiritual Merchants *Art* of Trading for *Heavenly* Riches, Pearls of great price; but there must be a *Diving deep*. If we have not this *Art of Diving*, we shall lose the rich Pearls: the *deepest diving down* in the practice of Meditation, comes up with the *Greatest Returns* of Soul Enrichments.

Solomon in *Eccl.* 7. 25. hath *a very emphatical Expression*, to hold forth this we are upon: Our Translation hath it, *I Applied my heart*, but the Hebrew hath it, *I Compassed, and my heart that is Compassed to search*, and seek out Wisdom: Or, *I and my heart Compassed*, so in the Margin we have it. There's *Coming* upon a thing, and a *Compassing a thing*, the heart in Meditating is to *compass in* a thing, as well as it can. They say *in Philosophy*, that wisdom lies in *Perspection*, *Introspection*, and *Prospection*, that is, in viewing *throughly*, all over, viewing *inwardly*; and viewing what *may be eventually*, what may be the issues of things; it *prys* into a thing, and *looks* round about a thing: makes the Mind endeavour an *Extensive* and *Comprehensive* knowing, as was said. Meditation in Spiritual things, should be like *Nehemiah* when he came to *Jerusalem*, and would go view it; *He went and viewed first one part, and then another*, till he had gone round. So Meditation looks largely,

largely, views what it can take in and conſider.

As God took *Moſes* to the top of Mount *Nebo*, *Deut.* 34. 1. ſhewed him *all the Land of Promiſe*, part after part round: Thus when we go up this Mount of Meditation, we muſt ſearch, view, look round, take in as *large* a proſpect as we can.

This is the Sixth thing Meditating includes as to the Object, a ſpreading our Eye, looking as largely, and ſeeing ſo much as we can, for the Ability and Opportunity is given us.

CHAP. XII.

Meditation is a Dwelling of thoughts.

7. MEditation *includes a Dwelling* or a Commoration of the Thoughts upon the Object, *drawing* out the Golden thread of Holy Thinking to its *due length*; giving the mind *its full ſcope* and allowance of *Abode* on the meditated matter. Meditation is in *Scripture*, and oft particularly in the Book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, expreſt by the phraſe of *Conſidering*.

In Conſideration, there is, 1. *Application* of the Mind to an Object. 2. *Intenſion* upon it. 3. *Pondering* of, or ſearching into it. And this 4. thing of *Commoration*, or the Dwelling of the Thoughts for ſome due ſpace of time, for viewing and reviewing. For *ſecond thoughts*, bettering of Thoughts, and better *compleating* this great Soul Affair of Meditation. This Meditation *needs muſt have* that allowance that all *Great Muſings* and Conſiderings have. Such as

Rare

Rare Artiſts, Exquiſite *Engineers*, Deep *Philoſophers*, and great *Stateſmen*, all *Noble* and *Ingenious* ways muſt have for their times of ſtudyings: they muſt have their *due ſpace* of time for thinking, and *lengthen* out their mindings in that time; to make as we ſay, *no more haſte* than good ſpeed. A ſtaying a *while* will make an end the ſooner, make the work the ſurer.

Meditation is not a haſty hurry of thoughts: that's Precipitation, not Meditation. It is not gathering *half-ripe* Fruit, that which hath not its time for the *Influence* of Heaven to come down upon it, and its *own internal* principle and power of its Nature, to produce a kindly maturation, a kindly ripening. We will not have (for want of time) our Bread *dough-baked*, or meat *raw-roaſted*: knowing that which is not *rightly* prepared for the body, may breed Diſtempers, *if it bring* not Death. It is not the way to thrive, look well, and be ſtrong, lively and chearful: why ſhould we gather our ſouls precious fruits *half-ripe*? feed our *Souls* with *dough-baked* Bread for want of a little time? Some things muſt have *Infuſion* for taking forth the Spirits and Tinctures of Colours. Others a due time *for percolation and ſtraining*, for a *ſegregating* and ſeperating of the finer parts from the Feculent and Dreggy: And ſome things a longer ſpace, in a *ſlow* and *conſtant Fire* in the Operation, or the coſt and labour is loſt: Intenſions for effecting things *greatly beneficial* and admirable, are *moſt freely allowed* a *larger proportion* of time, both for frequencies and Repetitions of Muſing ſeriouſly. But O how *too ordinarily* do the *beſt* of Saints fall ſhort of the actings of *Rare Artiſts*, in their higher Operations, in *their ſtands and abodes*

of

of thoughts for more *curious* Obſervations, and *intellectual ſatisfactions*: Uſually we are *too haſty* and eager to have Duties over. The Soul is *in pain* till it be delivered of them. In Meditation it is hard (ſometimes at leaſt) to take off the thoughts for it, *from preingagements* of other thinkings, and apply them to the duty. But *harder* to become duly ſerious in acting in it, *harder* yet to *Dive and Ponder*, and *hardeſt* of all to *hold up* in an abode of thoughts, and dwell long enough, and after *views* to make *reviews*, to *re-act* the ſame thinkings, to *taſte* things over and over, when the *freſhneſs* and *newneſs* is paſt, when by long thinking the things before us ſeem old; we are ready to grow *dead* and flat in a performance, except we *ſtir up* our ſelves often in it. It is hard to *hold on* and *hold up*, unleſs we *hold up a wakeful Eye*, a *warm affection*, a *ſtrong and quick repeated Reſolution*; yea, and without often lifting up the Soul to Chriſt, for freſh recruits of ſtrength to hold on. *David* that ſo excellent Artiſt in this way, ſaith *he will Meditate*, *Pſal.* 119. often ſaith *he will*. Doubtleſs he not only ſaid I will, when he was to make his entrance into this hard work; but likewiſe for continuance in it, to keep up his heart from flaging, till he well ended his work. It is not the *Digging* into the Golden Mine, but the *Digging long*, that finds and fetches up the Treaſure. It is not the *Diving into the Sea*, but ſtaying longer, that gets the greater quantities of Pearls. To draw out the Golden Thread of Meditation to its due length till the ſpiritual ends be attained. This is a rare and happy Attainment: This is the Art, but of the ends of Meditation we ſhall ſpeak hereafter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Affectionateneſs in Meditation, or the life and luſtre of it in the intermixings of ſutable Affections.

THree things we propoſed in treating of this Divine Meditation.

1. The right Preparative to it, fervent Prayer.

2. The main Foundation of it in the free choice of the Will.

1. To firmly purpoſe a right work that it be ſincere.
2. To purpoſe and intend a wiſe work.
3. To deſign a warm work.
4. To have it earneſt againſt lets and oppoſitions.
5. To have it a ſucceſsful work.

3. The Forming and Finiſhing of it. For the Forming and Conſtituting of it, which is,

1. By a Reverential frame of heart ſtir'd up, anſwerable to the Duty.

2. By firſt ſounding a Retreat of the Thoughts from all other Objects.

3. By ſetting a ſtrong Guard upon our ſlippery Spirits.

Then as to the conſtituting the work.

4. By ſetting the Thoughts on the Object.
5. By ſeriouſneſs in Thinking.
6. By ſearching of Thoughts.
7. By a ſtaying and abode of Thoughts.
8. For *Finiſhing the work*, by intermixtures of the Life

Life and *Beauties of ſuch Affections*, as are proper and ſutable for the Duty. It muſt be an affectionate acting, warm and zealous, lively and vigorous. So *David's* Meditation, *Pſal.* 39. 3. *while muſing the Fire burned.* Not only it ſhould be *ſo eventually*, but by way of *concomitancy*; when we Meditate with the Mind, we ſhould be warm at the Heart: The fuel and fire of holy Affections, muſt come to the offering up this Sacrifice. There muſt be an *Affectionate acting*, which brings the *life* and *beauty* into the *body* and *face* of the Duty.

They ſay *Beauty* muſt have theſe four things.

1. Perfection or Intireneſs of parts, no part wanting.

2. Proportions due, no part too great, too little, or unſutable: And proportion of Colour, White and Red in a juſt proportion.

3. There muſt be *Right Order* of parts, that nothing be miſplaced.

4. There muſt be *ſpirit and vivacity* appearing in the Face, as a chief Ingredient or ſuperaddition to all the reſt, as that which adds ſingular grace and luſtre to all. So beſides the parts and chief lineaments, there muſt be that which *compleats* the Beauty of Meditation: Thoſe things which are as, not only the *Beauteous Colours*, but the *freſhneſs, livelineſs, and ſpirits* aſperſed, and appearing over all the Face of this Rare Piece, this Excellent Performance.

That as the *Heart*, with its Diffuſions of Heat and Spirits in a due proportion, makes a *comely, graceful, and lovely Colour*, which in Heart-Diſtempers, Faintings, and Sinkings, diſappear and vaniſh: So the Holy Heart with its Diffuſions of

heavenly warmth and ſpirits, heavenly affectionateneſs, makes Meditation comely, beauteous, and lovely.

If Meditation be only *Head-work*, and not Heart-work, it is like a Picture without life; like a *Student* that ſtudies in a meer acting of Wiſdom only.

The right and *genuine Meditation* is an affectionate thing: as the Head acts, the Heart glows. The *life veins* of warm Affections run and diſperſe themſelves through the whole Duty, and *give luſtre* to it. This we may ſee in the Meditations of that great Artiſt in this kind, in holy *David* you may ſee a *beauty and excellency* of Holy Affection mixt and interwoven, like the Gold in *the Tiſſue* with the Silk, and *ſparkling* in his this-way-acting. Affections appearing ſet as ſo many Rich Stones, Rare Beauties, and Glories among his various Muſings.

There are *Three ſorts of Affections* that ſhine glorioufly in *David*'s, and other holy mens Meditations, left upon Record in Scripture, which needs muſt be patterns to provoke us to imitation.

1. The Affection of Deſire.
2. Of Love.
3. Of Delight. I ſhall briefly diſpatch them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the First Affection, Desire.

1. THat Affection of Desire *wound up*, and let out to pantings and longings Heavenward, and being above, in this Heavenly Exercise of Meditation. *David* with his Meditating of God and his Word, he tells us what longings and heart-pantings he had. *Psal.* 119. 20. *His Soul breaks for desire, which he had to Gods Testimonies*: How was this? to have the Book of the Law? no it was *to be exercised in it*, to an improving of Meditation on it. *Ps.* 1. 2. Ah he could not Meditate enough, act freely enough, far enough: The Commandment *was so exceeding broad*, as he saith, *Psal.* 119. 96. so *very broad*, and his heart so narrow: Sin so incompast and straitned him, that his Soul breaks, that he could have no larger thoughts. Such an edge and eagerness of Affection, such a large, strong, and vehement desire, should be an attendant, an assistant of Meditation, one *strong Feather impt and added* to the Wing of Contemplation to make it mount up fast to Heaven.

Ah, say Christian, *Lord that my soul could Meditate still better*, flye farther, mount higher, be more upon the *wing*, make sweeter and more happy discoveries, and prove a *greater proficient* in this Heavenly way! Meditate with desires and breakings of Soul, to dart up the highest you can to Heaven, and stay there.

CHAP. XV.

Of the next Affection, Love.

2. THe next Affection, which ſends a *Great Artery* of vivifical Heat, a *glowing Heat* into this Meditation, is that of Heavenly Love, Love to the Duty and the Excellent things to be Meditated upon: Love is the *great Heart* Fire, made to warm every holy ſervice: *Pſ.* 119.97. *O how Love I thy Law, it is my Meditation all the day*? Love led him into this pleaſant *ſoul walk* of ſweet Meditation, and Love kept him company, kept his heart warm in it. *The fulfilling of the Commandment is Love, Rom.* 13. 10. and Love is the fulfilling of this Commandment of Meditating: It is performed in Love. This *Heart vital Heat* of Love, muſt move to and in Meditation: *muſt glow* through the whole work all the time of it. Meditation is *either of the infinite* beauties of the moſt bleſſed God, the infinite perfections and ſurpaſſing glories of his Eſſence and Attributes, and of the Three Perſons in that Eſſence: or elſe of the *precious Word* or *Works* of God, his general Providence and Government, or his peculiar Governing of the reaſonable Creatures, *eſpecially* that ſo ſtupendious work of Redemption by Chriſt, and all thoſe things which are reducible to his praiſe; which muſt needs, being ſo beauteous, have their *ſurpaſſing lovelineſs*. And therefore there is great reaſon to *act love* abundantly towards them: To have Meditation ſtill richly *perfum'd* with actings of burning love all over it.

O let Love ever come in and act its part in Meditation, wherein the Souls Eye is *not only glancing*, but *wiſhly viewing* the ſurpaſſing beauteous things of Heaven, or ſuch things as may lead up to Heaven. *Ah if I cannot aſcend in a Flame of love, yet let me in Meditation flye up in ſome ſparks of Love. If my heart cannot burn in the flame of Love, let it keep warm upon the Embers of Love.* Let Love give it a *ſpirit, vigour*, and *livelineſs*: As *Solomons* Temple was inwardly *all overlaid with Gold*, let this rare work of Contemplation be overlaid and inlaid with Love: *Cant.* 3. 10. as *Solomons Chariot* in the *Canticles, the midſt of it paved with love*; ſo let this Chariot of Contemplation the midſt of it be paved with Love.

This is the Second Affection, Love.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the laſt Affection, Delight.

3. THE laſt Affection, *to make a threefold cord*, to draw up the heart in Meditation, and that winds the work up higher, and that is a great ſuperadded Beauty and Glory, is the Affection of Delight, Joy and Pleaſure.

Meditation *muſt not be a dull*, ſad, and *diſpirited thing*: Not a *driving like* the Chariots of the Egyptians, when their Wheels were taken off, but like the *Chariots of Aminadab, Cant.* 6. 12. *Make me like the Chariots of Aminadab, that ran ſwiftly*: So let us pray, Lord in Meditation make me like the *Cha-*

riots of Aminadab, that my ſwift running may evidence my Delight in Meditating. Holy *David* makes *Delight* ſuch an Ingredient or Aſſiſtant here, that ſometimes he calls this *Exerciſe of Meditation* by the Name of Delight, *Pſal.* 119. 16. ſpeaking in the foregoing Verſe of this Meditation, *I will Meditate in thy Precepts*; in the 16. verſe, *I will Delight my ſelf in thy Statutes*: which is the ſame with Meditation, only with ſuperadding the excellent qualification due Meditation ſhould have; This Name is given from this *noble concomitant*.

As Wiſdoms *ways are all paths of pleaſantneſs*, ſo this path it hath its pleaſantneſs and ſweetneſs: Contemplation hath its *rare and moſt pleaſant walks*; No *Habitation* hath ſuch Rooms, ſuch Galleries within, of pleaſure: Nor *Gardens* without with ſuch Walks and Curioſities: No *Situation*, or Stand, ſuch Proſpects and varieties of delightful Eye-Objects as Meditation enjoys. All *Objects* that Nature or Art can preſent to the Eye, are meer Shadows and Nothings in reſpect of the *rich* and *rare* Furniture the Eye of Meditation is provided with. The Traveller, *whoſe feet and helps* have carried him the fartheſt, *whoſe Eye and Obſervation* hath viewed and taken in never ſo much variety and Curioſity, that hath *recreated*, *raviſht*, and *ſatiated* it ſelf never ſo *largely*, with any of the moſt taking things the whole Worlds fullneſs compriſes; *hath not*, *cannot come neer* to, and compare with the *tranſcendencies* of *pureſt*, *higheſt*, *Soul-refreſhing*, *raviſhing Delights*, this *high Operation* and *more ſublime acting*, conveighs and gives in: where the *Object is ſpiritual*, the *Eye Spiritual*, the *heart holy and ſpiritual*, and the way of acting upon this Spiritual Object is Spiritual, as every way or-

Or-

Ordinance of Chriſt is. Or where the *Object is excellent*, the faculty exerciſed *on it is excellent*: the Medium or way of Applying the Faculty *to the Object is Excellent*: There the Delight and Pleaſure is moſt rare and excellent.

There are *ſundry ſorts* of pleaſures: There are *ſenſitive pleaſures* of the external Senſes, as of Hearing, Seeing, Taſting, and the like: Theſe are very various and very great, too often too bewitching and beſotting.

There are *Phanſie, Imagination-pleaſures*: I ſay the pleaſures of Phanſie, which are rare and higher than thoſe of the outward Senſes: Imagination and Phanſie which is a *quick*, ſudden, ſhort, and ſhallow apprehenſion of things (it is not *judgment that ponders*) but *a ſudden ſlight taking in* and acting: this is (eſpecially in ſome ſorts of perſons) a very high Spring and *ſtrong Feeder* of Delight or Pleaſure; of Pleaſures that come like things freſh, quick and ſpirited to the Body and Senſes. Phanſies, *O how they perfume*, like richeſt ſcents, pleaſe like *briskeſt and moſt racy Wine*! Phanſies (though often very fond and vain) yet are great *inſets of Delight*.

3. There are *Intellectual Pleaſures*, Rational Joys and Delights: Theſe *are more high*, ſublime, and refined, and therefore more ſweet, ſuch as the Pleaſures of underſtanding *new, rare Notions, excellent Speculations*, and apprehenſions of ſolid and precious Truths, and the Minds Muſings on them, Taſting, feeding on them; this in it ſelf is a more tranſcending Delight than the two former; though Phanſies weigh more with ſome, yea, though ſenſual Pleaſures take moſt with abundance.

4. But there are beyond the former, namely,

thoſe that *are ſpiritual Pleaſures*, Delights found and felt in a holy and ſpiritual Heart, in *one that hath a Principle far above Senſe and Phanſie, and Natural Reaſon*: that a renewed Mind, a Spiritual Underſtanding, a Wiſdom from above only *reaches and reliſhes*; and theſe are beſt and *ſweeteſt*, when they are not only taken into the Soul, by *an act of apprehenſion* and conceiving of them, but when they paſs into the more *inward Room*, or Office of the Mind, into *the Judgment*; when they are there *detained in Conſideration*, and by Meditation *give down their delicious ſweetneſs*, like Grapes in the Wine-Preſs: Meditation is ſuch a *Soul Engine*, ſuch an inſtrument of ſuch a manner of Operation, that nothing in the World, the *higheſt Objects* of Senſe, Phanſie, or meer Natural Reaſon, can act with that Complacency and Delight.

Solomon in his *Eccleſiaſtes*, that rare Record of his ſo large and infallible Experience of all things for Pleaſure and Delight, tells us he found nothing ſo ſweet, and *which he could act upon* with that Delight, as when he *acted up* in Meditation, *Eccl.* 12. 13. *David* oft *expreſſes what joy he acted*, in this *ſoul-engagement*: yea tells us *as he did*, ſo *he will delight* himſelf in it, and the Heavenly Objects of this Heavenly work: *Heavenly things and a heavenly heart meeting in Meditation, will act and make the pureſt pleaſure.*

Meditation therefore muſt *have this Attendant* of Delight; which *like a flame*, like the Chariot of *Elijah*, *carries up the ſoul in muſing into Heaven.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Some other particulars added in ſome ſpecial Scripture expreſſions.

BEſides theſe *three Affections* of ſtrong Deſire, ardent Love, and holy Delight, that like Heat, and Spirits conveyed from the Arteries (ariſing in the heart) into all the Body, to adde to and compleat what we have in ſome meaſure expreſt; there are theſe Three or Four things, I ſhall a little ſpeak to.

1. Meditation ſhould be a work *very ſavoury* on the Palate of the Soul.

2. It ſhould be *ſweet and pleaſing* to it.

3. It ſhould be with ſatiety in it.

4. With an Admiration, as the Crown on the top of it.

1. It ſhould be performed, not as a thing that is *diſ-reliſhing*, but ſavoury to the Spirit in the doing: *Rom.* 8. *Thoſe that are after the Spirit, ſavour the things of the Spirit.*

There are *ſome things are unſavoury* in themſelves, others *though ſavoury*, yet not ſavoury to ſome Palates. The things of Heaven are none of them *in no degree* unſavoury in themſelves: Meditation is not ſo in it ſelf, but to a *carnal Spirit*, it is one of the *greatly unſavoury things*, greatly diſpleaſing and diſrelliſhing: But to the *Spiritual man* it is not ſo, but a work *ſingularly* ſavoury, like *Iſaac*'s ſavoury meat, like feeding at ſome *noble Feaſt*, where a good ſtomack, and a right Palate, *feed* and ſavour, ſtill ſa-

vour

vour the delicacies and varieties ſucceſſively, every thing is ſavoury. There are ſome things ſavoury, as *Nature* yields them; others, *and in great variety*, as *Art reduces and orders them*; and accordingly there are very *admirable diverſities* of ſavoury things, which have their degrees of ſavourineſs: What great varieties are there made by *Art*, from the *meaneſt food*, to the *higheſt delicacies*? yet in the *Goſpel Feaſt* of Fat things full of Marrow and Wine on the Lees well refined, in the Feaſt of all *heavenly varieties*; Meditation hath more *unſpeakably rare dainties*, than all that Nature or Art can yield. *1 Cor.* 2. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear hath not heard, what God hath prepared for them that love him.* Not *the greateſt* of the greateſt Princes, not *Solomons* moſt *Glorious* Feaſt, not *Aſſuerus* his Royal Feaſt, not any of the *Perſian* or *Roman Emperours* ſo much ſpoken of in Hiſtories, could occaſion a Feeding with ſuch *high ſavourineſs*, as may be had in the rich and precious things Meditation hath to feed the Soul with. Therefore, O let Meditation be ſtill *moſt ſavoury*, let every ſpiritual thing be very ſavoury; as there are more varieties of Objects, and higher degrees of Excellency in them, endeavour *a ſuitable*, *an extenſive*, and *an encreaſing ſavouring*: As men at a Feaſt paſs from the firſt Diſhes to the after Dainties, with a more eager feeding and better reliſhing. This is the firſt thing.

As Meditation ſhould be ſavoury, the ſoul well reliſhing of it; ſo likewiſe

2. It *ſhould be ſweet*. This I further adde, in that the Spirit of God is pleaſed to honour this pious expreſſion of the Holy Prophet (by recording it for us) who after a moſt heavenly *Torrent of Elegancy* in

in expreſſing the ſurmounting Excellencies of God in the wonderful ways of his workings and governings, ſays there in the cloſe of *Pſalm* 104. 34. *His Meditation of God ſhould be ſweet.* How *ſweet* muſt Meditation be upon *infinite ſweetneſs*, and from whom all other ſweetneſs, Creature-ſweetneſs, Word and Ordinance-ſweetneſs, derives it ſelf?

Pſal. 119. 103. *O how ſweet is thy Word to my taſte, ſweeter than Honey to my mouth!* This muſt be *chiefly by Meditation*: It is that which preſſes and *ſucks* out the rare ſweetneſs in the Precepts, ſo *Holy and Righteous*: in the *Promiſes*, *ſo precious*: in the *incouragements*, ſo high: and in all the excellent things in the ſo perfect word of Chriſt. He *not only aſſerts* the ſweetneſs he found in Meditation; *but is tranſported* with high Admiration: And when he *could not ſpeak of it* to the height and fulneſs, then (which is our uſual manner) when we are at a loſs for expreſſion in words of comprehenſiveneſs, to wrap up our ſelves in the elegancy and terms of an Interrogation and Admiration; yet not *contented* with this way, for fuller repreſenting his experimented ſweetneſs, he takes up a compariſon, ſays *ſweeter than Honey*, which in that pure Air of that bleſſed Land of *Canaan*, was the moſt *ſurpaſſing ſweet Honey* in the World. Yea, in *Pſal.* 19. 10. *Sweeter than Honey, and the diſtilling of the Honey-Comb*, which is the ſweeteſt of all others: But this was *in holy Meditation*, that *made the Honey melt in his mouth*, and give down its ſweetneſs. Meditation *that drives the Hive*, *drains* the Honey, and *drops* in the delicious ſweetneſs into the Muſing Spirit. Lord *teach us* the way of this Heavenly Art, and make *this Honey* drop, and the Heavenly *Manna* of Divine

vine Truths fall richly into our hearts. This is the ſecond particular.

3. Meditation may and ſhould *be attended* with an Heavenly *and ſpiritual ſatiety: Pſal.* 63. 5. *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied, as with Marrow and Fatneſs, when I remember thee on my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night-watches.* His *rare hours* introduced and made returns of Heavenly ſatisfaction.

The largeneſs and excellency of it he ſets out by a very ſutable *expreſſion, ſatisfied as with Marrow and Fatneſs*, which to the ſtomack yields the beſt ſatisfaction, the ſpeedieſt and ſweeteſt, the moſt large and laſting. No food ſatiates better than Marrow and Fatneſs. So *Iſa.* 25. 6, 7, &c. The Goſpel Feaſt, is a Feaſt *of Fat things full of Marrow.* There are the Fat things of a *perfect righteouſneſs* applyed, of a *full pardon* obtained, of Reconciliation and Peace with God made, *John* 1. 12. and glorious Adoption conferred through Chriſt, the *Feaſt of the Feaſt*, together with the *ſatisfaction* of the bleſſed Image of Chriſt, in the beauteous lineaments of Holineſs and righteouſneſs, light and life, of all Graces and Excellencies, and *all drawn to the life, and wrought up* by the Holy Spirits Inhabitation and Operation, and ariſing from Believers happy Union and Communion with Jeſus Chriſt and his fulneſs. And likewiſe as a glorious ſuperaddition, that of *Aſſurance* of a moſt happy condition, and of the *unchangeable love* of God, and that bleſſed Hope of Eternal Life, which ſtrews Sugar, drops unſpeakable ſweetneſs and ſatisfaction upon and into the holy heart, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. Theſe and ſundry others are the *fat things full of marrow*, and make up the Feaſt; and are from the actings and *induſtries* of this happy way

way of Meditation: As therefore the Heart is hungry and thirſty, in continual Lingrings and Longings, and never quiet, Meditation muſt *carry* it to this royal Goſpel Feaſt, and thereby meet with a bleſſed ſatisfaction, not being contented with the ſight of the *Feaſt* and the delicacies of it, without attaining ſome happy ſatiety.

The Prophet *Iſaiah* mentions one dreaming of eating, but when he awakes his ſoul is hungry: If we look not well to it, Meditation may be but ſuch an unprofitable thinking, as when we have ended it, we may miſs of this ſatisfaction, find our ſouls empty. It muſt be ſtill ſo managed, that it prove a help and cure to my Soul's *inordinate* lingerings, and *improve* to a ſpiritual ſatisfaction.

Plutarch in his *Morals* tells of one *Pythos*, who finding a rich Mine of Gold, and out of his eager deſire to have the Treaſure in the Mine, was ſo continually attending *at the Mine*, that he neglected his comings home to his Meals: To confute his covetous induſtry, his Wife one day (inſtead of providing him food) prepared nothing but Golden Diſhes, with ſeveral ſorts of Meats caſt into the forms of ſundry things edible, but all of Gold; whereby he could obſerve a *curioſity of invention*, but was diſappointed of feeding and ſatiety. We muſt not in our Meditation content our ſelves with feeding the *eye for curioſity*, but endeavour feeding the Soul *unto ſatiety*, heavenly ſatiety. Ah let my Spirit mind more a fullneſs of *ſatisfaction*, than *newneſs of Notion*; carry it from Head-work to Heart-work, from bare ſpeculation, to *rare and raviſhing* ſatisfaction!

This *for* the third particular, Soul ſatiety.

4. *Admi-*

4. *Admiration.* Let me, to ſet the Crown on the head of the Duty, adde one thing over and above, let Meditation be *carried up to admiration*; not only ſhould we be affected, but *tranſported*, rapt up, and *raviſht* with the beauties and tranſcendencies of heavenly things, act Meditation to Admiration, endeavour the *higheſt pitch*, coming the neareſt to the *higheſt patterns*, the patterns of Saints and Angels in Heaven, whoſe actings are the pureſt higheſt Extaſies and Admirations. Thus were theſe ſo excellent Artiſts in Meditation, *David* an *high acter* of Admiration in Meditation, as often we ſee it in the Pſalms, ſo in *Pſ.* 8. 1. and the laſt Verſe, *Pſ.* 31. 19. *O how great is thy goodneſs? &c. Pſal.* 104. 24. *O Lord how manifold are thy works? &c.* And in other places *Davids* Meditation and Admiration were as his Harp well tuned and excellently played on, in *rareſt airs*, and *higheſt ſtrains*; as the *precious Gold*, and the *curious burniſhing*, or the *richeſt Stone*, and the *exquiſiteſt poliſhing* and ſetting of it. So bleſſed *Paul*, who was a great Artiſt in muſing, *acted high in admiration*, his ſoul was very warm and flaming up in it: It was as a Bird with a ſtrong and long wing that *ſoars* and *towers* up aloft, and gets out of ſight.

Thus ſundry of the Ancients, as holy *Auſtin*, *Bernard*, and others of thoſe, who have recorded their *rare hours* of Meditations and Tranſportings of Admiration, liftings *out* of themſelves, and liftings *up* to Heaven. A precious Miniſter of Chriſt oft in his life time would wiſh, he might die in the heavenly Exerciſe of ſinging a Pſalm, in which he uſed to be tranſported in Meditation and Admiration: At length he had, in ſinging a Pſalm, his holy

holy wiſh, dying in the performance; whereby he was rapt up (after his raviſhment, in the Duty) into Heaven, changing his *place*, but not his *work*. Another, a man *eminently learned* and heavenly, riding with a friend in his Coach, he fell into a *rare Contemplation* and Diſcourſe of the glory of Heaven, and the *beatifical viſion*; in which he was ſo *highly raviſht*, that within a ſhort time he was ſuddenly taken from this Earth, to take his poſſeſſion of that Glory he had ſo before in Contemplation.

Thus I have weakly endeavoured ſome explication of this happy work of holy Meditation.

It muſt firſt be begun with fervent Prayer. It muſt be *founded* in a purpoſe of, 1. A right work. 2. A wiſe work. 3. A warm work. 4. A ſtrong purpoſe of earneſt ſtriving againſt all impediments. 5. An endeavour of the kindly iſſue and ſucceſs.

It muſt have likewiſe,

1. Putting on a holy Reverence and Awe.

2. A Retreat of thoughts from all other Objects than ſuch as we are to muſe on.

3. A ſtrong Guard muſt be ſet to keep off all diverſions.

4. A ſetting on the thoughts on the Object.

5. A ſerioulneſs of thoughts.

6. A ſearching of thoughts.

7. And then a ſtaying and dwelling of thoughts.

8. An intermixing of heavenly affections, 1. Deſire. 2. Love. 3. Joy. And Meditation ſhould have 1. A ſavourineſs. 2. A ſweetneſs. 3. A ſatiety. 4. Come up and be carried on with holy admiration.

There remains one thing more to be ſpoken of in the Deſcription given of Meditation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Ends of Meditation.

MEditation we deſcribed to be an inſtitution of Chriſt, and duty of a Chriſtian, wherein the Mind acts upon ſpiritual things, or *other things in a ſpiritual manner*, by a due conſidering of them, and this to holy ends or ſpiritual uſes only: Now the Ends of Meditation are three.

Three great Ends of our Meditating.

1. Such as refer to the moſt high God.
2. Such as reſpect our ſelves.
3. Such as relate to others.

1. Such as refer to the moſt high God. Meditation is to be the *motion of the heavenly ſpirit*, Heavenward; to carry it up to Heaven and *keep* it a time there: A *looking* of the Eye of the mind, and a *lifting up* of the heart, a making a *ſtay*, and *taking* a ſpiritual ſolace in Heaven with God.

All Duties we perform muſt be done to the *living God*, *Heb.* 9. 14. *to ſerve the living God.* If otherwiſe, our Duties are but dead works, loathſome as dead Carkaſſes. A living work muſt have for its ſupreme end the living God. God that is the firſt and beſt, muſt have the firſt *aim* and *levelling* to.

They ſay in Philoſophy, the laſt *end* muſt have the firſt *intending*: The firſt looking at, as the firſt *ground* and mover to any work. And as they ſay in Opticks (the peculiar Art that treats about the nature of ſeeing of Objects) *Quod primo radiat, eſt*

prim

primo viſibile; that which firſt irradiates, ſends forth that which through the Medium firſt conveys it ſelf to the Eye: This is firſt viſible, and that is light.

The *firſt thing* the Eye of Meditation ſhould fix upon, is that *which is the light of lights*, and that is God, who is all Light, Beauty, and Glory. Meditation ſhould be chiefly acted *to ſee God*, and to aim at glorifying of God above all, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *Whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

The Gentiles wiſe men, and great Philoſophers, becauſe their ſpeculations *were not acted* to the glory of God, were *vain imaginations*, *Rom.* 1.

Whatſoever the aim be, if the glory of God be not the real ſcope; nay if it be not the *maſter mark*, the work is miſcarried; and but a *ravelling* out of Time, a *loſing* of Labour: Meditation muſt make ſure of the right method, and order of aiming the glory of God, like the Sun in the Heavens that outſhines all other Lights below and above, and that which is to be ſeen *before, and above all others*; ſo this muſt be eyed and aimed at likewiſe, *far before all other.*

Three things to be eyed. Ah we ſhould eye, 1. The Infinite Glories and Reſplendencies of the Eternal and All-ſufficient God. 2. The infinite diſtances and heights he is in above us. 3. And the infinite Obligations that ever lie upon us, to exalt him beyond all.

As in the making of our whole man, whereby he is total owner of us, and proprietor in us. And in our preſerving, whereby we are yet more highly bound. And in the proviſions for our Eternal happineſs, which is far beyond all the former.

Therefore there's an *abſolute neceſſity* of this Me-

thod and Order, of *ſtill firſt aiming* every Duty, and Acting at this grand mark; and then to make it the *ſtriving and preſſing* hard of our Spirits to it. O that in my thinkings, in the aſcendings of my thoughts, *this glory of the great God* may ever ſtill aſcend: For no thoughts nor actings can truly aſcend, if they go not up to the bleſſed God and this glory of God; if God goes not up higher in our thinkings, they then go *not higher than ſelf*, and which is *but indeed downward*, and not *upward* at all. Nay, 'tis a worſe deſcent than that alſo, 'tis Deſtruction and Hell-ward whatſoever is Self-ward, and is not to the advanceing of the great God. Meditation is *not only to be acted to God* as a Duty, but *as this Duty*, in its peculiarity and propriety, as being *a peculiar ſtreight line* to God, as a ſingular way for our *taking aim*, this high aim at exalting the praiſes of God.

Thus did that *rare mark-man*, holy *David*, as it is admirably conſpicuous in the Pſalms, in *Pſal.* 103. 1 2. In the very entrance he lays a ſtrict, a repeated command upon his Soul and all that is *within him*, *to bleſs, and bleſs, and praiſe God*: Yea not *only lays his Meditation level* to the mark; but raiſes up his ſpirit *to take the pureſt*, the *fulleſt aim*; this both by a *ſelecting* and *improving* of ſpiritual reaſons, *the ſtrongeſt* he could find, and the moſt *quickning Motives* he could apply, all that his heart might carry up (in a heavenly flame) the higheſt praiſes of God. Thus you ſhall ſee him very frequently acting his Meditation up with the greateſt fervour to this exalting highly of God.

Meditation *is a peculiar viſit* made to the great God; a *Mind, a Thought viſit*, wherein as to a great friend, the Soul, as it were, comes and ſaith to God, Lord,

Lord, *I come to see thee*, I now come purposely to see thee, to *spend some fit portion of time with thee*, and I come for that *high Honour* and *Observance* I am infinitely obliged to tender to thee: Every Meditation is *giving a fresh visit*, and thereby a new tender of highest *Honour* we owe to this best of Friends. *This is the first end.*

2. The next end, is our *highly pleasing of God*, which by Meditation we are to intend: God will be both *obeyed and pleased* with our respecting and acting of every appointed way; *Meditation is the best way*, the most pleasing way of thinking. *Col.* 1. 11. *We are to walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing.* Therefore this must be performed *to an intended pleasing*, a due serious thinking, a pondering and dwelling of the thoughts upon heavenly things, and chiefly upon the infinite Beauties and Excellencies of God who is the perfect Thought and Heart-knower, the exquisite Searcher and Observer of Soul-actings: But then most, when *purposely pleasing is designed*: This must *very highly please him*, when we especially design pleasing, with our most *wishly eyings of him*, yea, *to intend the doing our best to please him*, *and this, O how should it greatly also please us! David, Psal.* 19. last *v.* prays for pleasing God, *Let the Meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my Redeemer.* So it is not only to be prayed for, but made the *holy aim* of Meditation with our utmost care. *Favourites to great Princes*, what industries do they use to please them, especially that their thoughts offered in Counsels may be acceptable? Thus, how did *Philotas*, who was *Alexander* the Great's Favourite; and *Mecenas*, *Augustus* his Favourite? and so among our selves di-

vers. But how *near goes* it to them if their Counsels please not? as with *Achitophel* when his Counsel pleased not *Absalom*; and on the contrary with *Hushai*, when his Counsel pleased. So when *Hamans* Counsel was rejected; and how *contrary with Mordecai*, when his Counsels were resented? Pleasing of a Prince is a great encouragement: *But pleasing of a God*, is a sweet Soul Contentment; it is most worthy striving after: O how *unspeakably sweet* will the finding and feeling of this, prove in thy heart, when Meditation is performed *purposely to please thy God*; when it runs in a pure stream, when thy spirit reflecting on its actings in Meditating, makes discovery of this *holy aim of high pleasing* the most high God? As the Scripture commands pleasing, the Saints are peculiarly *commended and greatly honoured* for it. As with wise and well bred people (obliging and pleasing in good things) great pleasing is a great praise. As *Abel*, *Enoch*, and others from this character of *pleasing God*. It *is a heavenly ambition* to earnestly design pleasing, as in all others, so in this *walking with God in Meditation*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Meditation reſpecting our ſelves.

2. AS there ſhould be ſuch aims relating to the great God, ſo *Meditation* muſt have its advantageous aims *reſpecting our ſelves.*

1. The *Grand Scope* and *End* of our *own happineſs.*

2. All other *Subſervient* and *Excellent Ends.*

1. The *grand End* of our *own happineſs*, and *working out our own ſalvation*, is the next ſpiritual end, that Meditation as a mighty Engine ſhould ſet on going to effect. It ſhould be ſure to be ordered up, and duly aimed at, acted according to the *aptitude and fitneſs* of any way in it, to further this *important end*: Muſing and right Meditation hath *a moſt rare tendency* and *helpfullneſs*, as to the *working out ſalvation.* As it is a *ſanctified means* on Gods part: ſo it muſt be *an earneſtly employed* help on our part: We muſt Meditate *ever ſo* that it may *help on ſalvation*; we muſt mean it and level it ſure, not any way deceive our ſelves, but take *the beſt and ſureſt aim.* Salvation challenges the *beſt eying*, the fulleſt, ſteadieſt, *ſtrongeſt aiming* of every way and help. Soul happineſs muſt not *have ſlender aims*, we cannot have aimings too ſerious and intenſe.

Let my *aimings here* have the keeneſt edge of ſeriouſneſs, be *elevated* the higheſt, made the *firmeſt* and the *moſt extenſive*: Let them take in *univerſally*,

whatſoever may moſt inſtigate to, and quicken in this high *operation*, proportionate it to this *working out ſalvation*, the ſo great Goſpel Salvation.

Thus did the *prodigal* (who repreſents the Returning ſinner) when ſenſible firſt of his unſpeakable miſery; and thence apprehenſive of the great obtainable Felicity, the ſo glorious *Goſpel ſalvation*; *never did he ſo act* any thinking, made *ſuch warm work of it as now.* In like manner the Jaylor, *Act.* 16. having ſuch a *dreadful awakening* from ſenſe of a loſt condition: O what a pondering of Salvation was that, from a *heart ſo warm'd* and edg'd? *when Extremity of Miſery hath the deepeſt ſenſe, Meditation of Salvation and Recovery hath the higheſt ſeriouſneſs!* What can have ſuch a thinking, as *when one thinks for life, and that eternal?* Let Meditation take in

1. *Thoſe Conſiderations* that are *moſt awakening*, that unſpeakable miſery comes upon us by ſins ſo innumerable: As contracting on the perſon ſuch horrid guilt, and conveying into the heart ſuch hellish filth. Every *ſin with the aggravations* contracting a debt to *Divine Juſtice*, and that entered into God's debt Book, which we never can pay or get paid without a ſurety, but muſt bring deſtruction in Eternal fire.

3. Then weigh the *great uncertainty* of life, and how certain death caſts every one upon an Eternal ſtate unavoidably, upon *inconceivable* Eternity.

4. Then muſt be weighed the *Mighty Enemies*, and multitudes of hinderances lying in the way of eſcaping.

2. Next come the Conſiderations that are the moſt highly *encouraging* to *ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait*

ſtrait Gate, ſuch as the Scriptures fullneſs ſupplies. O how great and prevalent are thoſe in the Goſpel, to *wiſe and warm us*, to ſtrengthen and heighten *Meditation*. As *Eternal life*, which in the believing heart is already begun, with ſure *promiſe of carrying it on to perfection*, by our yet *co-working with the holy Spirit of Chriſt*, *working in all his*, which we muſt do continually: *Phil.* 2. 12. *Work out your own ſalvation, &c.* What may I ſay of *conjunction with God*, by *union with Chriſt*, by Faith of Communion with Chriſt, in *juſtification* and *pardon* of ſin, a moſt glorious *righteouſneſs*, *reconciliation*, *adoption*, with a ſure title to Heaven, and the glorious *graces* of Chriſt, his *image*, *holineſs*, *wiſdom*, *life*, *power*, *peace* paſſing underſtanding, *joy* unſpeakable, with *eſtabliſhment*, *growth* in *grace*, victory over all *Enemies*.

Ah what *wiſhly lookings* ſhould we exerciſe daily at this ſo great ſalvation, and the tranſcendencies and perfections of it; and at laſt ſuch an *outlet of all evils*, ſuch an *inlet of all good*, ſuch a *Crown of Glory*, with all the inconceivable Excellencies of it, and the perfect fruition and viſion of God for ever.

I have been longer on this than was my purpoſe, yet ſhall crave leave for one thing more, and that which is (after all momentous conſiderations beſides) the greateſt, of ſtrongeſt influence and efficacy, that is the *vaſtneſs*, *inconceivable vaſtneſs of Eternity*: Not Eternity *meerly in the abſtract*, only conſidered in it ſelf; but in *reference to miſery* or *felicity*. I ſay, to all other inducements, adde Eternity; hang on this great weight of Eternity of Miſery and Felicity. Endeavour with thy *utmoſt Art* and *Induſtry*, by all *reſemblances*, to have che livelieſt and moſt *operative repreſentations of it*.

Breathe thy ſoul often by healthful exerciſe here, breathe thy ſoul frequently up this *Hill of Eternity*. Whatſoever thou meditateſt on, let ſtill this be one Object, entertained in thy *ſerious thoughts*, this vaſt Eternity: Let this have its due time.

2. Holy Meditation hath, beſides the former, ſeveral *other excellent ends* to be aimed at and improved to. As Artificers do with their Gold, *beat it out ſometimes to its utmoſt ductility* and *extenſiveneſs*: Improve this Gold of precious heavenly Objects, beat them out to the utmoſt by this Hammer, this art of *Divine Meditation*.

The *Art of Medtiation* will, like *Solomons* Temple overlaid with Gold, *overlay thy heart* with Chriſts pure Gold, and make it rich and glorious.

Ah therefore *Chriſtian*, act up thy Meditation to theſe precious ends, and chiefly lay a *mighty ſtreſs* upon that ſo momentous thing, *Eternity* of *Soul Miſery* or *Felicity*.

So I have at laſt diſpatcht theſe firſt things.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Of the particular Ends of Meditation in reſpect of our ſelves.

THere be various Ends of Meditation reſpecting our ſelves: I ſhall mention, among others, theſe ſeven particular Ends, relating to our own ſpiritual advantage.

1. For a *principal improver* of ſaving Knowledge.

2. For to make our Knowledge *Clear* and *Diſtinct.*

3. To found a *Rich Treaſury of Truths, and make them ſure.*

4. And to be an introducer of habitual wiſdom, an acquired habit of wiſdom, to the firſt given wiſdom, in heart *renovation.*

5. For a *Kindler* of *Heavenly Fire*, and *Flame* in the heart.

6. For a *Mighty Corroborater* of holy purpoſe.

7. To be a *conſtant quickner* of the Chriſtian courſe.

1. Meditation is for a *Principal Improver* of ſaving and heavenly Knowledge: To ſet as it were more Lights on the Golden Table in the Temple of the holy heart, to repleuiſh the Golden Candleſtick with more and better Lights, and glorious burning Lamps, to yield clearer light in the dark heart. *Pſal.* 119. 97, 98, 99. *I am wiſer than my Enemies, for thy Commandments are ever with me*; thats in Medi-

Meditation continually, as *v.* 97. *Thy Law it is my Meditation continually, or all the day, v.* 99. *I have more underſtanding than all my Teachers, for thy Teſtimonies are my Meditation,* and *v.* 100. *I underſtand more than the Ancients, &c.* Heres an aſſertion in a kind of gradation of the ſucceſsfulneſs of his holy Meditation, namely underſtanding, wiſdom, and excelling in them: Wiſer than his *Enemies*, yea than his *Teachers*, yea than the *Ancients*, that have had longeſt time, largeſt opportunities for greateſt Knowledge and higheſt wiſdom.

Meditation is the ground, *inlet*, and *improver* of Knowledge. It is not the great and much reading makes the Scholar, but *the ſtudying* and *pondering* that is read. It is not the reading much that makes the knowing Chriſtian, but the *meditating* on what is read: Reading without Meditation is like ſwallowing much meat without due chewing; *that* makes a *lean man*, ſo *this* makes a *lean mind*. Many read and hear Much, but underſtand little; becauſe they bring themſelves ſo little under this Ordinance of Meditation. If thou wouldeſt be right excellent in Knowledge, be rich in it, and of a *higher ſtature* in wiſdom than others, as *David* was; ſtrive to write after his rare Copy in abundant Meditating.

2. Meditation is to make Knowledge *clear and diſtinct*. The Apoſtle, *Phil.* 1. 9. mentions love, its abounding *in Knowledge and Judgment*, and in other places we have mention of *diſcerning and judging*. As to matter of Learning in Arts and Sciences, they have the moſt *clear and diſtinct heads*, have their Notions *moſt methodical*, diſtinct, and *moſt mellow*, who muſe moſt; contrary, thoſe are the weak and *eaſie Scholars* that muſe leaſt. Divers Chriſtians have their

their heads full of raw *confuſed things*, a company of *broken ends*, Notions of ſmall uſe to themſelves or others, for want of *due digeſtion* in Meditation: Gold Oar *without refining* and *ſound hammering* is of little uſe; want of Refining *keeps the Metal baſe*, want of Hammering makes it *brittle*, it will not be burniſht up to a full and perfect brightneſs, it will not *obtain a juſt* firmneſs: You cannot have ſo rich *Plate* or *Utenſils*, no *Veſſels* of it for your ſpecial uſe. The minds of too many Chriſtians *lye ſtrewed over with precious truths*, but neither clear or diſtinct: They are like *Houſes* or *Cloſets* where the rich things, Furnitures and Rarities lie covered over with duſt, or want brightening; or are ſo diſſevered, lie ſo ſcattered and out of place, that ſcarce any thing is for any preſent uſe. So there may be multitudes of Notions and Truths in the mind, but are obſcure and confuſed, a *duſt covers them*, a Curtain is drawn *too far* over them, they are of little *uſe*, *becauſe Meditation is little uſed:* Meditation is that, and muſt be that which *methodizes them*, that ſets them in order: Meditation *brightens them* and helps for to make them clear, helps them to a luſtre. Clearneſs, and diſtinctneſs will not be had without giving *down-weight* in due Meditation: And without a clear and diſtinct apprehenſion of things they are of little light to thee Chriſtian; of leſs influence as to others inſtigation and incouragement. A Scholar that hath his *Notions raw and obſcure* can make (at the beſt) but a Bungler. An Artificer, any Tradeſman that hath not his Art, but imperfectly, will make of it but a *mean way to live* and ſubſiſt: he that underſtands his way in Religion, will prove the *wiſe*, *warm*, and *fruitful* Chriſtian.

3. Medi-

3. Meditation is to be a chief help to the *Repoſitory* and Treaſury of Truths, to lay and *lock* up ſtore of precious and uſeful Truths more ſure, to fix the lights of truth firm, make them ſtand faſt in the mind. Serious Meditation is a great *advantage* to memory, the Souls Treaſury, that lays up precious Truths in the cloſe conveyances of the underſtanding, and locks the Doors faſt: Such as Meditate moſt, will have the ſureſt memory for things heavenly.

Holy *David*, to lay up and hide the Word in his heart, as *Pſal.* 119. 11. *did it as, by other*, ſo by the way of Meditation: As in the 15. Verſe, *by Meditation*, and *v.* 97. *Continually*. As Truths came to him, ſo made he them ſure by *Meditating*: his Treaſury and Stock grew richer and were kept the ſafer. As in Scholars, not the multitude of *Books*, or great Reading will make a Treaſury of precious Notions, and make them ſure for uſe, *but the due afforded* allowance to the clearing and fixing of them by Meditation. Chriſtians that Meditate will be rich in knowledge, and keep it ſure.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the next particular, the fourth end to produce habitual wiſdom.

THE next particular end of Meditation is to produce *an habitual wiſdom*, in the Mind of a Chriſtian: To be a *moulder and former* of the ſpirit into habitual wiſdom, to ſuperinduce upon the firſt Fundamental (that infuſed wiſdom, given in renovation and heart-change) I ſay to the firſt *ſaving* wiſdom, to ſuperadde and introduce an *habitual wiſdom* (acquired as they call it) ſuch a wiſdom as makes a Chriſtian more knowingly and wiſely skillful and ready for his way and work; to be beyond a meer Learner, to prove an Artiſt for working out his own ſalvation.

There is *an infuſed knowledge*, and an infuſed wiſdom, a wiſdom ſtampt upon and given into the Mind in its *firſt renovation* and *converſion*, for then a man ceaſes from being a ſtark fool for ſalvation, as the Scripture makes all in the ſtate of Nature, *Prov.* 1. 22. *&c. but by converſion and change of heart*, and by union with Chriſt firſt, and then communion with him, *as the wiſdom of his members*; by this they become wiſe, *by an infuſed wiſdom*, whereby they are wiſe indeed, wiſe to ſalvation; wiſe whereby the right and chief end and happineſs is diſcerned, and the right way and means to that end is *diſcovered*, and both *thereupon* deſigned and intended. But this is but a lower meaſure at firſt, a Seed, *a grain*

of

of Mustard-seed, as the Lord compares the state of Grace begun in the heart, *Mat.* 13.32.

But beside the former *infused wisdom* there is requisite *an acquired wisdom*, a superaddition to the other: This is a *noble help*, and an *improver* of the first; that as to *the Eye of Reason* and natural wisdom, *Learning* and *Experience* and *Exercise* brings in an *Habitual wisdom*, enlarging the Natural. As it is with a Scholar, or an Apprentice to a Trade, First his Tutor or Master *infuses principles* for the wisdom or skill of his Profession or Trade, whereby he can a little begin to act or work, make tryal, though but in an imperfect manner; but then by minding and musing of his instructions, and by exercise he comes at length to an *acquired habit*, to act and work *knowingly* and with facility, because he hath a new wisdom to understand his way. But without minding and musing *he would never have had the way*, the Art or Trade intended. Meditation (beside others) is a singular help to *Habitual wisdom*, to attain the Art and Trade of Christianity, *Prov.* 14. 8. *It is the wisdom of the wise to understand his way.* And *Eph.* 5. 17. *Be not fools but wise, understand the will of the Lord.* Though they were excellent Christians, by the large measure of wisdom they at their first conversion received, yet he calls upon them to seek for more, to improve the wisdom infused to farther wisdom, to a spirit of wisdom, to an *acquired habitual wisdom*, to be Artists in their way, and excel in it. Nothing doth so mould the mind into *habitual* wisdom, as *Meditation*; nothing so improves and enlarges spiritual understanding, makes to understand our way and rule of walking, as Meditation, as serious and repeated thinkings.

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In natural, or any Civil Affairs, wiſdom in and about them is *not obtained* by bare thinkings, ſlight, ſhort, and tranſient thoughts, or by *ſeldom*, and *now and then* in a fit to think and away, but by *ſerious thoughts*, weighings and ponderings, yea by *frequencies* and conſtancies of thoughts and mindings. This way of thinking makes a man wiſe in his way, Trade, or in any buſineſs emergent: Its impoſſible to be wiſe with this *acquired habit of wiſdom*, without *taking time*, *making a ſtand*, an abode of thoughts, and thoſe ſerious alſo.

If we are haſty, ſhort, give not due allowance of Time, and *down weight* of thoughts, ſerious thoughts, we will not come up to *habitual wiſdom*; nor likewiſe we ſhall not act as wiſe Chriſtians are required to do, if habitual wiſdom be wanting: No man can act wiſely, or in *height or eminency* of wiſdom, except he act by a *perfect principle*, as the Angels and Saints in Heaven do, or as a perfect Artiſt, that *hath a perfect* skill and hand at ſome Art or work: The moſt of good Chriſtians, though they have true ſaving wiſdom for the ſubſtance, yet *have little*, very little wiſdom to underſtand their way, little of this *acquired habitual wiſdom*. This is the reaſon of their being ſo frequently to *ſeek*, ſo at a *ſet*, and at a loſs, not knowing what to do: The want now of this wiſdom, is from want of *Meditation*, ſerious and frequent muſing to *frame* and *mould* the mind into habitual wiſdom, and ſo increaſing in wiſdom daily.

That a Chriſtian may be an Artiſt, and have his Trade, have head and hand *adapted* and *readyed* for it, this muſt be by habit, through cuſtom and uſe. There are theſe four ſpecial things, excellent advantages in a habit among others. 1. It

1. It lays in ability for doing.
2. It induces facility in doing.
3. It breeds delight and complacency with doing.
4. It holds up evenneſs and conſtancy in doing.

A Scholar or an Apprentice put upon Employment for *learning an Art* or *Myſtery*: *At the firſt* he wants (for the preſent) the ability to act as an *Artiſt*, a *Logician*, a *Philoſopher*, or the like, and ſo the *facility*, *pleaſure*, and *conſtancy* cannot be come at; becauſe they are the higher ſteps or ſtories built upon the firſt, that of ability: But when by time he hath *accuſtomed himſelf* in a way, he comes to an *habitual* knowledge and skill, and that habit brings ability to do; and with *ability goes facility*, eaſineſs to act in the art or way; then with *facility is pleaſure* and delight attending, what we do with eaſe is pleaſing. Then what *breeds* Pleaſures, *brings* alſo *conſtancy*, and doing with evenneſs and equality. O how *deſirable* is this wiſdom in Chriſtianity, how *highly is it to be contended for*, to have this wiſdom, this *Art of going to Heaven*, of living to the living God, to arrive *at a doing* with an improved wiſdom, a wiſdom of *ſuperadded ability*, with a happy facility of acting, a ſweet *delight* in acting heavenward, and a beauteous, a glorious evenneſs and conſtancy: Not to be and remain *ſtill weak* in our Trade of godlineſs, not be to *ſeek ſo oft*, as not knowing *our way* in divers caſes, not to drive ſo hardly on, not to be ſo *dull* and heavy, nor yet ſo *unevenly* and brokenly to carry on our work, but with all forenamed advantages, to be daily ſtill experienced to higher encouragements.

This is a *grand end* of Meditation to work up to *habitual*

habitual wiſdom, to help a Chriſtian to excel in this *ſoul Beauty* of an exquiſite Artiſt and Operatour for Heaven and Eternity.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the fifth End of Meditation to kindle and enflame the Affections.

5. MEditation hath not only its excellent ends and uſes, relating to the underſtanding and mind, but alſo is of ſingular uſe relating to the Affections. Meditation is that which keeps alive the fire on the Altar, and helps to make it burn: It is that which both *gathers the ſticks*, the *fuel*, and *materials* for keeping the fire from going out, and that which *kindles them*, blows upon them, and makes them burn and flame up to Heaven.

In the *Levitical Law*, the fire upon the Altar muſt *never go out*, but it was kept burning by the Prieſts *continual minding it*: If they had not *minded* that fire *continually*, it would have gone out. The *fire in the holieſt heart* it muſt be kept in, kept burning continually *by Meditation* and *conſtant mindings*: Meditation is a *great Heart-warmer*, it *renews* and *encreaſes* ſpiritual heats, *drives away dulneſs* and *dead heartedneſs*, brings a *new life*, ſtrength and vigour into the ſpirit, when it faints and flags.

They ſay of the *Loadſtone* (that *wonder* in Nature) when either by careleſneſs in keeping it, or by ſome accident it loſes its virtue, yet by *laying it ſome good ſpace* of time in the *filings of Steel*, it will again re-

cover its virtues; when the ſpirit of a Chriſtian by not looking well to it, loſes of its heavenly *heat* and *livelineſs*, the way of recovery is by *laying it aſleep* in this ſo warming and quickning Meditation. O how burning and flaming may we often obſerve the ſpirit of the holy Pſalmiſt *David*, in his acting of Meditation? As *Pſal.* 39. 3. *My heart waxed hot within me, and while I was muſing the fire kindled* or *burned*; Muſing made him hot, yea *burning hot* at the heart. Thus oft in the *beginning* of a Pſalm we find his heart low and diſcouraged, but as this Muſing was acted and heightened, his ſpirit grew hotter, and at laſt flies all on a flame, flies up to a very high pitch of heavenly heat. O how do all the conſcientious Practiſers of Meditation, ever and anon *experience* theſe happy heavenly heats, and heart-enlargements! Ah if all the Saints ſo glorious heart-quickenings were gathered together, what a rich Chain of Pearls, *Pearls of rare Experiences*, would they make up of the heart-warming Efficacies of Meditation?

Meditation is a *mighty Engine* to kindle cooling hearts, and make them flame in fervency: The Rule of effecting a buſineſs, *eſpecially* entangled in difficulties, is firſt as they ſay *Removendo prohibens, & applicando promovens*. That is, by removing the Obſtacles firſt, and then applying furtherances. Meditation is inſtrumental to heart-warmings and quicknings: Firſt by making a *grand inqueſt* into the occaſions of heart-coolings, and helping to remove them. Then ſecondly, by ſtirring up to the *efficacious means* of warmth and quickening; its a rule among the Schoolmen, that every *Negative is founded in an Affirmative*; that is, every not doing is founded

in

in ſome poſitive act of doing ſomething elſe. And as to the like purpoſe, we ſay in Philoſophy, *The intention of one thing is the diſ-intending of another*: Meditation makes an enquiry, and thereby a diſcovery of that which hinders ſpiritual heat: The extinguiſhing of fire and heat in Nature, is either by *caſting on* much water, or *ſmothering* it, by either throwing on much incombuſtible matter, or *hindering* the airs openneſs, and its free coming to it, which choaks it, or by *withdrawing* the Fuel upon which it feeds. 1. Meditation finds heart-coolings to proceed from a giving way to and the preſent prevailing of ſome corruption or luſt, that like water quenches the fire. They ſay that ſome rich ſpirits and rare extractions, if taken in ſome acid or ſour Liquor, the ſowr Liquor turns the edge of thoſe ſpirits, and fruſtrates their operation: As *cold clammy humours* at the head of the Nerves or Sinews, ſtop the courſe of the *Animal ſpirits*, and occaſion the Numm, or dead Palſey: Or as ſome *cold Poiſon* taken in, quenches the vivifical heat and ſpirits, endangers if not induces death: So a corruption or ſin let out and given way unto, chills, and cools, and quenches the *heart-heat*, and the longer yielded to, the cooler will the affections grow.

A Sin given way unto, *damps* the heart-warming Ordinances, *quenches* the heart-warming ſpirit, *obſtructs* thy communion with a heart-quickening Chriſt. *Hoſeah*— *Whoredom and Wine, and new Wine take away the heart*: what is there ſpoken of a more total taking away the heart in evil men, is true of a *gradual* taking away the heart, the heat and livelineſs in godly men.

2. Meditation on due Enquiry finds heart-coolings

to ariſe from Chriſtians *ſmothering* their heat with heaping up *buſineſſes* and troubles upon themſelves, launching too far into the Seas of worldly Affairs and over-carings. The *thorny ground* had the *word choaked by cares and affairs of this life*: what cares and buſineſs doth to the Word, it doth to the hearts warmth; can thou entangle thy ſelf in the matters of the World, and thou wilt cool apace. The farther a man Travels from the Sun Northward, the cooler he is: Turn your face from Heaven to the World, go far, and you come to not only cool, but freeze. Or as *ſhe* in the Roman ſtory that out of a deſign to enrich her ſelf, contracted with the Enemy to betray the Caſtle, for that which the Souldiers had on their left arm (meaning their Golden *Bracelets*) but the Souldiers, inſtead of their *Bracelets*, threw their Shields on her, whereby ſhe inſtead of being enriched was ſmothered.

To engage in a *throng* is the way to be ſmothered: The world will ſmother thee if thou engageſt too far, it will ſtill cool thy *heart-heat*, make thee of a warm and lively, a cool dead-hearted Chriſtian.

There is a *Fiſh* call'd the *Torpedo*, if you touch it with your bare leg, or hand, it preſently nums that Limb that toucht it: Touch with thy heart upon the world, it will leave it numb; there's no ſuch way to keep in thy heat, as to keep out the world, avoid the danger of a Crowd of buſineſſes and cares.

3. Meditation upon ſearching, diſcovers the decay of heat is from decay in heart-warming Ordinances, where the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhines warm upon thee, whereby the *Soul-heat* is both preſerved and encreaſt.

Abatings of *heavenly heat*, ariſe from drawing

away the *fuel* of heavenly duties, or thy own *remiſneſs* and negligence in them.

If a man ſhall caſt away his Cloaths, leave his food, and decline the means of preſerving heat and life, he muſt needs grow cold, if he be not quickly kill'd. If a man reads not, meditates not, prays not, hears not, or is negligent and formal herein, he muſt needs like a dying man grow cold: It much depends upon the lively *performance* of *holy duties*, that you keep *Heart-warm*, or that you *decay* in your *fervour* by careleſneſs in the means: Meditation will mind you of this, and put you upon mending it in time.

The Angel of the Church of *Epheſus*, *Rev.* 2. forſook or left his firſt Love, his *Heart-heat*; and Chriſt intimates, he had left off his *firſt works*.

2. Meditation is inſtrumental to ſpiritual *vivacity* and warmth, *applicando promovens*, by helping to apply the things, that recover and promote heat and livelineſs. I will name but two things in this, 1. Meditation mightily helps here, by being a *great inſtrument* of ſearching out, applying and working home the *Scriptures Heart-warming conſiderations*, ſuch as the *quickning* Spirit, the inditer of the Scriptures, that knows what things are moſt proper and proportionate for recovering or increaſing heat, what he hath left upon record to uſe in this caſe.

As conſideration is the *firſt mover* in the ſoul, ſo *warm conſiderations* are the *firſt warmers*: O what a *latitude and fullneſs* hath Meditation to fetch *heart-warming* conſiderations from! If the *Eye looks up to the Heavens*, what abundance of Heavenly bodies, for conveyance of light and heat it ſoon diſcovers?

But if the eye of Meditation looks into the Scriptures, *what a prospect of various rare and glorious passages is there to be found of Considerations?* Like abundance of *richest Spirits*, *highest Cordials*, and preparations of all sorts, in Artists Shops and Closets. O what *heart-warming* considerations can Meditation fetch and apply from the infinitely blessed God, his infinite Excellencies, Eternal Love, sweetness unspeakable, of the sense of his Favour, and the like: Ah what *heart-warming* considerations from *Jesus Christ*, to behold him and view him all over, in all he is in his unexpressible Glories? In all he hath done, *whereby he hath out done all that ever was or shall be done?*

What warming considerations in respect of the *Holy Spirit*, *the grand and mighty applyer of Redemption*, by his habitation and operation? What in respect *of the Word, the Precepts, Promises, Threatnings, and Examples in it* of sundry sorts, all for our help and comfort? What of the *Covenant of Grace*, so sure and sweet? What in respect of *our selves, souls state*, and all the great concerns of it in salvation? Meditation can never want *heart-warming considerations*, can bring *stores of Arguments* of all sorts, and blow upon them, to make the heart kindle and flame, although it was chill and dead, and never so low brought.

Lastly, *this Engine of heavenly Meditation* produces heart-warmth and vivacity, by taking thee *out of the shade and cool*, and leading into the Sunshine of *Heart-warming Ordinances*, wherein the *Sun of Righteousness arises, and shines warm*, and his *quickning Spirit* breathes *warm* upon thee, *Rev.* 2. 5. As a cure of cooling and decaying Love, Christ counsels

counſels the Angel of that Church of *Epheſus*; firſt to *repent*, and then to *do his firſt works*. Negligence in holy Duties, omiſſion of them, or *remiſneſs* in them, introduced a *cooling* of his Love; therefore what was loſt by not doing, muſt be recovered by ſuch a doing as the firſt was; that his firſt works done again, might be a *rekindler* of his *firſt Love*: Diſuſe of Exerciſe abates the natural heat and vigour, but returning to it, will again recover it. Meditation when it finds the *failure* and defect, will provoke and engage to the juſt Remedy and Relief.

I have now diſpatcht at length this ſecond End of Meditation, its being for *quickning* the Affections. The next follows.

CHAP. XXIII.

The End of Meditation in reference to the will.

MEditation, as it is to be a helper to warm the affections, ſo for *a means to ſtrengthen and fix the holy purpoſes and reſolutions of the will:* It is not a *wavering and weak purpoſe*, or a *feeble reſolution* will ſerve for a *foundation* for *building ſo high as Heaven*, for carrying on ſo *great* and *hard* a work as ſoul-ſaving. The Scripture mentions *cleaving* to the Lord with *purpoſe of heart*, *Acts* 11. 23. Holy *David* often in the Pſalms tells us of his *will*, his *purpoſe of heart*, and his *heart was fixed*, *Pſal.* 119. and *Pſal.* 108. 1. Meditation is ſingularly inſtrumental here,

1. Of fixing and *deeper rooting of the grand general purpose* of pleasing and glorifying God, and working out our own salvation.

2. It's greatly instrumental for *corroboration* and for *strengthening* the *lesser Roots of derivative purposes*, that spring from the *grand purpose*, that are the particular *Abettors* and *Helpers* of the main and general forementioned purpose. In every holy heart there is planted at first conversion, *that fundamental and noble purpose* of pleasing and glorifying God in all things without exception: This purpose also must be *often renewed*, have its *reiterations* for *corroboration*. There must be also *derivative* and *subservient* purposes, particular purposes, in reference to advancing the main purpose, and the Souls chief end and intendment, purposes for particular soul-concerns, particular Duties either *respecting Mortification* of particular corruptions, and particular *self-denials*, or that respect *particular graces* and *duties*, in the seasons required for them. Every particular Duty and Soul concern, must have the hand of a peculiar purpose lent it to assist it. Right undertaking, as it must have the mind *acted in wisdom* to direct it, so it must have the *will acted* in *purpose*, *deliberate purpose*, to effect or endeavour it. Grace in the will must work it into a due purposing for the particular occasion of every particular incumbent Duty, *Purpose of heart to ground Performance*.

The Scriptures give *frequent instances* of both *general* and *particular* purposes this way practised. First of the general and grand purpose; thus *David* very often in the Psalms declares, so *Psal.* 119. 8. *I will keep thy Statutes*; there's a general purpose

super-

superadded to the first purpose that he did when he first gave up his heart in conversion to his God: Thus in the 69. *Verse* of this *Psalm*, *I will keep thy Precepts with my whole heart*; there's another general purpose. And *Psal.* 116. 9. *I will walk before the Lord in the Land of the living*, there's another of his *added* general purposes for serving God. *Psal.* 119. 57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord, I have said I will keep thy word.* There he tells you what he had done in the time past, he had said, as in the former he saith, what *he would do for the future.*

So in the 106. *Verse*, he tells you what a purpose he had taken, such as had a confirmation of an Oath, or as some expres, it had *quasi vim Juramenti*, as it were the strength or force of an Oath, yea here tells you what he did in time past, and what he *will do for the future*: *I have sworn*, there's the time past: *And will perform*, there's purpose for the future: A *recalling* of his old purpose, and a *renewing* of a fresh purpose to back the old. So others of the Saints in Scripture are to be observed, to accustom themselves frequently to strengthen the *first general purpose*, with the additions of *frequent following purposes.* As *Jos.* 24.

So for particular purposes, for particular coming occasions, we have frequent instances of holy mens practices. In reference to avoiding sin, *Psal.* 101. 3. *I will set no evil thing before my eyes.* In reference to taking heed to our ways and words, *Psal.* 39. 1. *I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue.* In reference to *trusting* on God in difficulties, *waiting* upon God, *worshipping* God, *praying*, *praising*, and all sorts of Duties and Graces, *Love*, *Joy*, *Hope*, *Courage*, *Constancy*, *and the like.*

Purposes

1. Of fixing and *deeper rooting of the grand general purpose* of pleasing and glorifying God, and working out our own salvation.

2. It's greatly instrumental for *corroboration* and for *strengthening* the *lesser Roots of derivative purposes*, that spring from the *grand purpose*, that are the particular *Abettors* and *Helpers* of the main and general forementioned purpose. In every holy heart there is planted at first conversion, *that fundamental and noble purpose* of pleasing and glorifying God in all things without exception: This purpose also must be *often renewed*, have its *reiterations* for *corroboration*. There must be also *derivative* and *subservient* purposes, particular purposes, in reference to advancing the main purpose, and the Souls chief end and intendment, purposes for particular soul-concerns, particular Duties either *respecting Mortification* of particular corruptions, and particular *self-denials*, or that respect *particular graces* and *duties*, in the seasons required for them. Every particular Duty and Soul concern, must have the hand of a peculiar purpose lent it to assist it. Right undertaking, as it must have the mind *acted in wisdom* to direct it, so it must have the *will acted* in *purpose*, *deliberate purpose*, to effect or endeavour it. Grace in the will must work it into a due purposing for the particular occasion of every particular incumbent Duty, *Purpose of heart to ground Performance*.

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Purposes

Purpoſes and Reſolutions general and particular, and the frequent uſe of them: Linking purpoſe to purpoſe, ſtrong purpoſes are ſtill neceſſary for every Chriſtian that will work out ſalvation: Yet all *muſt* be done in the *ſtrength of Chriſt*, elſe they will not hold, but wear out, and ſnap aſunder.

Now Meditation is rarely inſtrumental herein.

1. Inſtrumental to make our purpoſes *wiſe*, we muſt ponder and conſider before we purpoſe; raſh *purpoſes* and more ſudden, without due bottoming in a *previous Meditating*, will prove but miſcarryings and abortions. They are like fooliſh building on the Sand, they ſoon fail: *A purpoſe, the more deliberate, the more durable.*

2. Meditation helps to make *purpoſes ſtrong* and *firm*; we have need of *ſtrong purpoſes* for the great things of Eternal life: we have ſtrong oppoſition from corruption within, and temptation without: Meditation helps mightily to ſtrengthen Reſolution.

1. By repairing to your ſpiritual Magazine, and thence fetching forth *ſtrong ſpiritual Arguments* to raiſe *ſtrong Reſolutions and Purpoſes.* Arguments out of the rich ſtores of Scripture, of all ſorts and natures, to relieve the weakneſs of the *will* in purpoſing: Meditation acts a *Divine reaſoning, diſputes you into a purpoſing*, when it ſhews you have ſo much for it, and nothing at all againſt it.

2. Meditation *ſelects and ſharpens Arguments*, ſets home, and *improves* them upon the conſcience, that you muſt yield, muſt reſolve, and firmly, ſtrongly, in ſuch matters as none can be higher.

O how many ſtrong and unanſwerable Arguments can Meditation come furniſht with, to diſpute *againſt carnal unreſolvedneſs*, to plead for your act-

acting ſtrong Reſolutions for any part of an enjoyned Duty? What weight can it put into the Ballance to caſt the Scale for Gods and your Souls intereſt? I need not name the heads of Arguments, ſuch as the indiſpenſible neceſſity of the Precept and means, the great ſinfulneſs of unwillingneſs, the excellency of the thing, with the ſweetneſs, comfort, confidence, and advantages attending it: But this I ſhall adde, The excellency of a Chriſtian lies chiefly *in his will*; and the excellency of that will is in the *height of its purpoſe* and *reſolution*, freeſt purpoſe and choice, firmeſt reſolution and determination for the work he came into the world to do: And the *great Aſſiſtant*, on our part, of holy reſolution is holy Meditation, applying fit reaſons to ſtir up reſolution, and inſtigating to all thoſe ways that breed and cheriſh it. And this latter is another particular whereby Meditation is a relief and fortifier of good reſolutions and purpoſes.

2. Meditation, I ſay, is a *great ſtrengthener* and *ſtabliſher* of holy *purpoſes*, both as it is a directive, and inſtigative; as teaching us what are the ways to help us in purpoſing, and as inſtigating and provoking to the Ordinances and means, that will water the Plants of holy purpoſes, make them root deep, and ſhoot up high, flouriſh and bear fruit. If our purpoſes are weak; if our hearts in purpoſings are apt to ſlip out of joint; no ſooner ſet, but as ſoon ſlipt, or ready to diſlocate and be out of joint; what remedy then have we but conſideration or falling to meditate, to make a true inquiry firſt of the right and proportionate ways of healing *this will-malady*, this heart-infirmity? 2. And then Meditation inſtigates to a due uſe of diſcovered helps,

helps, of infirm and inconſtant reſolutions, draws you to and *through the whole circle* of means, provokes you to try every Remedy to cure theſe abortive purpoſes. It directs and leads you to all the Ordinances of help, to the promiſes that make over help, to a Chriſt and all his Fulneſs of help, to the holy Spirit for his applying effectually of help, to ſtirring up Faith, to acting recumbencies and reſtings on Chriſt in the Promiſes, to ſtirring up our ſelves, to humble our ſelves for our failings in our purpoſes, and to ſtrive againſt them, watch our hearts ſlipperineſs, and to labour keeping our reſolutions and purpoſes better. In Natures order, doing is *upon* reſolving, *reſolving upon conſidering*; ſo in grace, performing is upon purpoſing, purpoſing ariſes from pondering and meditating. The Saints in Scripture that acted the higheſt reſolutions, exerciſed the deepeſt Meditations, as we ſee, in that man after Gods own heart. Fits and flaſhes of *Phanſie*, never breed firm purpoſings; but ſuch reſolutions that lie longeſt aſteep in due preceding Meditation, have the deepeſt tincture and holding Colour. Longer I have been upon this particular, as a point more material, becauſe the art of raiſing and fixing, heightning and improving holy reſolutions, is ſuch a happy fruit of Divine Meditation, ordered to that bleſſed End.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Meditation as a grand ſupporter of the Chriſtian courſe.

4. MEditation is for a conſtant *keeper up* and *ſupporter of* the Chriſtian courſe, as to the evenneſs of this Golden thread, without decays, ſinkings, ſtands, and interruptions. 2. As to improvements and goings on to perfection. 3. And as to conflictings with Enemies and Oppoſitions.

This was holy *Paul*'s practice, by ſtill taking in the higheſt provoking conſiderations, minding and due pondering of them; it made him to labour ſo abundantly, to preſs ſo hard *to the mark, forgetting the things behind, and looking to the things before.*

He meditated on the *Price of the high calling*, kept his Eye on *the Crown of righteouſneſs*, he kept his Eye alway on the ſtores and varieties of Goſpel encouragements.

A Chriſtian of the *greateſt conſideration* will ever keep up beſt *his evenneſs and conſtancy.*

New freſh Meditations are new Soul feedings, new meals, which adde new ſtrength and vigour; they make a Chriſtian like *Elijah*, when he had eaten, to travel with new ſtrength to *Horeb* the Mount of God.

There is *a Beaſt in the Weſt-Indies* they call *Pigritia*, which ſignifies ſloth, for its ſtrange ſlow pace, which is going *fourteen days* a ſtones caſt; and

and they have contrarily a glorious Bird call'd the *Bird of Paradiſe*, that is ſeen generally flying, and in a very expedite motion.

Divers for *running the bleſſed race of* Godlineſs, go *creeping* ſlowly, making little haſte or progreſs, certainly they meditate little. The *ſwifteſt of foot* in Chriſts way are the frequent ſerious Meditaters; Meditating makes the Birds of Paradiſe, the Chriſtians of the perpetual motion. I might adde more to this particular, but I haſten to the next.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the End or Uſe of Meditation in reference to others.

3. THe third and laſt End or Uſe of Meditation named, was in reſpect of *others*: As the former ends were in reference firſt to God, then towards our ſelves: So this we come now unto, is in reſpect of others.

Meditation in reference to others, to perſons of all ſorts, is to fill the treaſure of the heart with *good things*, and to *fit* the good man out of the good treaſure of his heart, to bring them forth to furniſh others, and be ſerviceable to their ſpiritual condition. *Luke*---- *The good man out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things.* He firſt lays in a good treaſure, ſtores himſelf with the riches of heavenly treaſure, and then brings it out: It is not a *work meerly of phanſie and imagination*, but chiefly of Meditation and Conſideration: Imagination takes

takes in varieties of things in a promiſcuous manner, without differencing or diſtinguiſhing. Imagination makes a *collection*, Meditation makes a *ſelection* and *dijudication*: Meditation obſerves what precious things are offered us, and lays them up, and diſcerns what are not precious, and lays them by; yea by Meditation there is not only an old ſtore laid in, but there will be alſo an adding of new. It is this rare Art of Meditation that both founds and fills the treaſury with old and new: Phanſie and Imagination, as it is in divers, may fill the mind *with traſh* but not *with Treaſure*, with things *that glifter*, but are *not Gold*.

It is this Meditation that *makes diſcerning* betwixt the precious and the vile, that takes up on ſearching the treaſure found and diſcern'd, and lays it up in the treaſury of a good heart: And this is *firſt* for the good mans own ſtore and ſupply, but then it is *alſo* for to enable him to bring forth, for others uſe and help, to bring forth in firſt diſcourſe, that is ſpiritual and ſavoury for the *Nature*, and that likewiſe is *ſeaſonable* and *ſuitable* for the occaſion offer'd, to bring and ſhew forth the *Apples of Gold in their Pictures of Silver*, as *Solomon* ſaith of a word ſpoken in ſeaſon; likewiſe to hold forth things that are exemplary as to a fruitfulneſs in walking, to bring forth the good things of light to ſhine out, light of *precious edifying* truths, and light of rich and *rare experiences*, and to bring out the good things of a heavenly, quickning, comforting, and encouraging Nature. Meditation, as it is the great way of gathering up things that are uſeful, and filling the heart-treaſury; ſo it is to be the way of *direction* to open it, and bringing forth in diſcourſe

the

the good things stored up: And by this imparting them to others, we our selves have a double advantage often following. 1. A clearer and more distinct apprehension; as Silver and Gold brighten by use, not by lying up. 2. A *warmer* and *livelier Affection*, and when they come forth *warmer* by discoursing, they are the apter *to warm others* and make their hearts burn within them.

This then is one End, one great and excellent End of this so excellent way of Meditation: *That as face answereth to face in water, so heart may answer heart in warmth.* When things have been well warmed in the Forge and Furnace first of *Meditation*, and then in our *Communication*; Fire may kindle Fire, and one warm heart may occasion another. Discourse, that is the *meer product and fruit of Phansie and Memory*, and hath not some rise and tincture of warm Meditation; some discovery of *heart-heat* is like *flushes of lightning*, or the *shining of the Moon*; they make a shew, but warm not; *No body is warmer by the one, no heart is warmer by the other.*

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of the ſeveral kinds or ways of Meditation.

WE now, from the divers Ends of Meditation, proceed to the ſeveral kinds, or ways of it.

Meditation is either that which is more ſet and ſolemn, or that which is more ſudden and ſhort. 1. That which is more ſet and ſolemn; and this is either the more ordinary and daily, or that which is extraordinary, upon ſome more peculiar Occaſions, both which the Scriptures hold forth in the recorded Precepts and Precedents therein.

1. *The neceſſity of daily Meditation.* The firſt way of ſolemn Meditation, is that *which ſhould be daily:* That as private Praying and other Duties, are a Chriſtians daily ways of exerciſing himſelf in Godlineſs and walking with God; ſo holy Meditation *is one golden path in the great Road to Heaven,* one way of *breathing his ſoul* daily up the *Hill of Eternity,* and *meeting with God* in the Mount.

Pſal. 1. 2. The holy Prophet makes it a Character of the bleſſed man, that he *Meditates in the Law of*

God day and night: Where we have held forth, as they ſay, *Gratiam & Gradum*, the Grace and the Degree of that Grace; the Grace, he doth Meditate; the Degree, day and night: Thus much hereby muſt then be implyed, that as it is to be performed often, ſo it cannot well be performed by the Rule in this Scripture paſſage, if *every day* in courſe there be not ſomething done this way, either more or leſs; certainly we cannot give God and our ſouls concerns *too much meaſure*.

So *Pſalm* 119. He tells us his daily practice, to Meditate both in the day and night. Now his Example, being a King and under ſuch varieties of *important Affairs*; ſo many and ſo great as none can have more: And if he had ſtill ſuch cares, troubles, and dangers attending, might not theſe have excuſed to ſome abatement of his conſtancy? but it did not: This therefore leaves all ſorts of perſons *without excuſe*, none being able to alledge, *that which he could*, or not *more urgencies* of daily occaſions: There is no doubt, that as it is a work lies upon every one, *ſo ſure as the day returns* and the freſh buſineſſes of it; ſo this Meditating of right doth challenge for it ſelf *ſome fit ſeaſon and portion* of the day, being one of the great buſineſſes for the Souls help.

As no Chriſtian can plead exemption from this *daily incumbency*, *this daily ſoul affair*; ſo no good prudent Chriſtian can conceive, but he may find out in the *revolution* of the day, ſome at leaſt fit opportunity for ſerious Meditation: Or if not in the day time (the time of action and avocation) yet in the night *upon the Bed*, the time of reſt and freedom. What was ſaid of that great Warriour *Hannibal*, making

making his way into *Italy* over the high rocky Mountains, the *Alpes*, with Fire and Vinegar, *Hannibal will either find a way, or make one*; and is ſaid of Love, *It will creep if it cannot go*; a good heart will find or make its way over Mountains of Difficulties and Buſineſs, to have Communion with Jeſus Chriſt, *Cant.* 3. 1, 2, 3.

Ah it is moſt ſad, if I can allow *ſo many hours* in the night for reſt and ſleep, *ſo many* in the day *for buſineſs* and *emergencies*, ſo many for *eating and drinking*, ſo many for *company and diſcourſe*, yea ſo much time for *pleaſure, play*, for *trivial things next to nothing*, it may be for things *worſe than nothing*, for *ſins and luſts*, and that no part of the *twenty four hours* muſt be afforded for ſerious thinking, thinking of things *ten thouſand times* more momentous and concerning than the *total ſum* of matters, that ſweep away and ſwallow up precious time ſo much. The good Chriſtian cannot but at leaſt cloſe with the *eternal obligation* of this duty: And the *wiſe and fruitful Chriſtian* cannot but yield ſome complyance with the practice of it, and let this come in for its *due ſhare* in the time of the day, as *one important* buſineſs to be diſpatcht, and that muſt ſtill contribute to the *right making of it up*, and *improvement* of it. After ſome evidence of the *equity* of this daily Duty, I come to ſpeak to *the Nature* and *way* of this Meditation. This being of all other ſorts the principal, which therefore challenges a more diſtinct and careful handling.

If Chriſtians *very well* underſtand not this way, or *fall very ſhort of the due manner and order of it*, the work is neither ſo *pleaſant* or *ſucceſsful* as it might be and ſhould be, and queſtionleſs is to Chri-

ſtians ſuch as are the great Artiſts herein, ſuch as have been well practiſed and experienced in it. I ſhall therefore now endeavour to ſhew the Nature of it, and ſomething of a Method of due proceeding in it.

In general, it is that daily exerciſe whereby we ſingle out purpoſely ſome ſpiritual or uſeful matters, to act the ſearchings and ponderings, which according to our ability and *opportunity* of the day we can exerciſe for our ſpiritual advantage.

The Mind is a Spring *alway running* in thinkings, a Wheel *alway turning*, a Forge *alway framing*, a Wing *ever moving*; it is the moſt *active*, *buſie*, *nimble thing* in all the world, therefore hath the greateſt need to be well lookt unto, to be kept, as *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 4. 23. *With all keeping keep thy heart*; to be guided with the beſt skill and care, with the ſteadieſt and ſtiffeſt rein, like a Horſe of *higheſt metal*, ready to run away with his Rider; it will run *wildly away*, and carry the ſoul into *vanity*, *folly*, and *ſelf-miſchieving*. Meditation is a *ſpiritual rein and curb*, and the peculiar deſigned way to reduce, rectifie, and order it.

To bring the hearts *thinking power* into the *higheſt ſubſerviency*, the greateſt uſefulneſs to the main, to the Souls grand intereſt: Therefore there is a great neceſſity upon every good heart, of daily and much Meditating.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the manner and way of daily Meditation.

1. EVery Chriſtian is to *awake with God in the morning*, *Pſal.* 139. 13. as *David* when he awoke *was ever with God*, at his awaking times in the *night*, by *thinking of God*: ſo chiefly when *he awoke* laſt, when the *night* was paſt, with all the *dangers* of it, and the *day dawned*, *then the morning-ſtar of Meditation aroſe in his heart.* The firſt work in the morning is to *awake with God*, and the noble *thinking faculty*, which upon *awaking* will *inſtantly awake*, and begin to ſtir, begin to act: Let it be *awakened* into this *ſweet way* of *ſelf entertainment*, by engaging of it in holy *Meditation.* Look we that the heart be firſt of all *ſeaſoned*, *ſweetned*, and *perfumed* with *heavenly thoughts.*

1. Begin we with ſerious *reflections* upon the *great goodneſs* and *tender mercies* of God in our preſervations from Satans *malice* and *miſchiefs*; what *affrightments*, in *noiſes* and *appearances*, in *violence* and *harms* would he exerciſe, if he were let looſe upon us? What *other harms* from wicked men, uſually taking the *advantage* of the *dark* and *ſtill night*, when all are at reſt, beſides *harms* from *accidental occaſions* that we are liable to. There is alſo the *great mercy* of *Beds* to lie on, *reſt* without *toſſings*, *eaſe* without *torments*, *ſleep* without *holding* our Eyes in *awaking*, *having our ſleep ſweet*, awaking with

refreshing, having our formerly *weary* bodies and *decayed spirits* revived and cheared, and we our selves under a *new adaptation* and fitness for the succeeding days *occasions*. There should be also *a stand and abode* of thoughts upon any thing in the *night* which is more *signal* and *remarkable*, that *comes down from Heaven*, as a *brighter beam* of favour to take the Eye with, that is *let down* as a more peculiar hand, to take up our thoughts to *Heaven* by, *that is sent* as a more special *Love-token*, stampt with more *legible Characters* of the care and kindness of a God towards us.

2. When the *nights* past *mercies* have had some due *Reflections* and *Musings*, had a *down-weight* of improvement endeavoured, for *warming* and *enlarging* the heart toward our good God: If then it conveniently may be, nothing to the contrary interposing, and that *justly* may *hinder*, the *next thing* then for the *way of our thoughts* should be to *look forward*, to the day *coming on*, and the *spiritual concernments* of it; or if it then cannot at the present be, yet so soon as we can to *set to* and *engage in* this so useful Meditation.

CHAP. III.

HEre the more particular Rules we may use for this daily Meditation, are these following. I say, the Rules we may use for the particulars of daily Meditation, and for *Method* herein, may be such as these following.

1. Medi-

1. Meditation *of ſetting up the Maſter Mark*, the *glorifying* of the *moſt high God.*

2. Next unto it, Meditation of *Eternal happineſs* in the *enjoying of God.*

3. Meditating then after it of the *ſure and adequate means* for attaining them both.

And theſe are therefore to be Meditated upon.

Meditating on 1. Jeſus Chriſt, the *only way to the Father* by his work of Redemption.

Meditating on 2. The *Holy Spirit* the *great applyer of Chriſt* and his *Redemption.*

Meditating on 3. The *holy Ordinances* of God, the uſual ways of the Spirits *coming to apply Chriſt by.*

Meditating on 4. The *Word of God*, chiefly the *Promiſes of the Goſpel*: Theſe on Gods part.

Meditating 5. On our part, by our *uſe of the Ordinances*, and the *Word and Promiſes*, and that *Faith* and *holineſs* whereby we come to *union* and *communion* with God, glorifie him, and obtain ſalvation; Faith as the *inſtrument of receiving Chriſt*, and both Faith and Holineſs, or the *graces of Chriſt* as our *principles of life and power*, to *live unto God*, and growing up to *perfection* againſt all *oppoſition.*

1. The firſt thing *according to the rule of beſt wiſdom*, which lays the *ſureſt foundation* in any courſe, is firſt to take into moſt ſerious conſideration, the ſupream and chief end, and to act a freſh ſetting up before us, that *Maſter-Mark*, and *ſcope* of the *moſt high God*, and the *glorifying of him*, to be continued as we can *through the whole courſe of the day*; I ſay, this ſo high *incumbency* and *duty* of looking ſtill at, and levelling all to *the glory of God.*

Meditation of this *glorifying God*, for pure, lively, and higheſt advancings of it, this is the Souls beſt operation, and runs *moſt parallel* to the *perfect work of Heaven*. *Heavens higher acting* is Contemplation of the *moſt bleſſed God*, for the moſt tranſcendent *exaltings of his glory*: The Rule of Scripture is, *To do all to the glory of God*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. And this Rule muſt therefore have its place and power here; therefore this *daily Meditation* muſt take it in, and ſet it up. It muſt be every ones wiſdom to bottom our *day Meditation*, with the ſtill *eying of*, and *aiming at* the *glorifying of* the *moſt high God*. To begin with the *freſh thoughts*, and alſo the *warmeſt frame* of Spirit, for farthering the ſupream end, the *glory of God*, and with it, as *fit to be annext unto it*, that which is wrapt up with it, our own *Eternal happineſs*. Philoſophers and Divines have ſeveral *Maxims* about the Supream End: To mention ſome of them to help us here: As,

1. *Finis ſummus, eſt maxime appetibilis*; The *chief End* is of all things elſe *the moſt deſirable*, *Pſal.* 73. 25. *Matth.* 6. 9. If (as it is moſt ſure) it be *moſt deſirable*, then this, as was ſaid before, is the *chief point of wiſdom*, to *chiefly eye and aim* at this chief End: and then ſure it is *moſt proper in the method* of our *daily Meditation*, to mind this one of the firſt, and how to advance towards it anew, on the opportunity of a new day begun upon us.

2. Secondly, there is *another Rule given*, which is *Finis ultimus præſcribit Regulas totius vitæ, ſed ipſi fini non præſcribitur*; That the *laſt* or *chief End* preſcribes or gives the Rules of the whole life, or courſe, but the laſt End hath no Rules preſcribed to it. In

In *all caſes the End* of any thing, that *gives* the Rules to that thing.

Thus that hath *profit and livelyhood* for its End, that *profit and livelyhood* gives the *Rules* to the *Trader*, and all his actings *are reduced* and *ordered* to *profit* and *ſubſiſtence.*

That of mens *particular* or a *Nations intereſt*, as it is called. The *particular intereſt of perſons* in particular: Or the *Publick intereſt* and *chief good*, that gives the Rules to *private men*, or to *States-men*; their *actings* muſt be to their *intereſt*, the chief *good* or *End*: So the Souls *grand intereſt*, real higheſt End and Intereſt, gives *all the Rules* to all a Chriſtians wiſe, truly wiſe actings.

Thus in *Phil.* 3. 13. *I preſs hard to the Mark*; firſt he ſet up the Mark, or that was ſet up before him to aim at: And this made him *preſs hard*, and *run* in the *right way* ſo earneſtly, made him uſe all the right means, and the due manner for attaining to it.

So *this of eying the Supreme End*, as the right ſure way, as the *ſure wiſdom for a mans ſelf*, *Prov.* 9. 12. this ſhould be firſt taken in, and come under freſh conſideration. That which gives the firſt riſe to endeavour, that which muſt *vitally influence*, and *ſtrongly inſtigate*, yea *fix and ſtabliſh* our whole courſe.

The courſe riſes or falls, ſtrengthens or weakens, bears up or breaks off in evenneſs, or unevenneſs according to our more or leſs lively, and freſh lookings at, and ponderings of the chief End.

This we ſee in all undertakings, the *manner*, *earneſtneſs*, *and evenneſs* of any courſe, is from the *manner*, *earneſtneſs*, and *evenneſs* of mans *eyings* of his *chief aim* and *intereſt* deſigned in it.

In

In a *Watch* and divers *artificial Motions*, the *evenneſs* and *expediteneſs* of the *motion* is from *evener* or *unevener*, ſtronger or weaker drawing of the Spring, the *firſt mover*. Thus is it in godlineſs, a Chriſtians *motions* are anſwerable to *his eyings* more or leſs of the *main end*: Chriſtians complain of their daily dead-heartedneſs, and unevenneſs; it much ariſes from the *ſo little* or *liſtleſs lookings* at the main Mark. *Paul* lookt *earneſtly*, and he preſt *hard*: In *Archery*, thoſe who eye the Mark moſt *earneſtly* and *ſteadily* hit the *ofteneſt* and *fulleſt*. The wiſeſt Chriſtian is the moſt *earneſt*, *equal eyer* of the *main End*. There be many *particulars* in this *head*, which according to *prudence* and *leiſure* may have their ſeaſons of ponderings.

The variety will breed delight, and *ſet an edge* upon the Spirit, apt to grow *heavy* and *weary*; they are ſuch as theſe: As the conſiderations of the moſt *high God*, in all his *infinite Glories* and *Perfections*: His All-ſufficiency, in his *Knowledge*, *Wiſdom*, *Holineſs*, *Righteouſneſs*, and the reſt: But chiefly in his ſo *infinite* and *unchangeable Love*, and *Riches* of *Free Grace*: The *Infinite obligations*, eternally lying upon us, for *glorifying* and *exalting* of him: The *infinite excellencies* and *fullneſs* of the *ſecond Perſon*, and his infinite Love, in undertaking with his Father, to *Redeem loſt ſinners*: And the *infinite love* of the *third Perſon*, the *Holy Spirit*, the *applyer* of *Redemption*. Some moſt *ſerious Meditation* of God, and *glorifying* him, to *give down* into the heart a *glowing heat* and *livelineſs*, for all the *following day*, is ſtill fit in ſome meaſure to be practiſed.

2. The next ſhould be ſome ſerious muſing on that *next End*, *our own ſalvation* and *Eternal happineſs*,

neſs, farther to be *wrought out*, to be our *day labour*, by the opportunity of a new begun day, a day, which will bring us nearer to the *Ocean* of *Eternity*.

CHAP. IV.

Of the next End, Salvation.

NExt to the higheſt Gods intereſt, muſt be muſed ſeriouſly upon this *great ſoul-intereſt*; *Prov.* 9. 12. *If thou art wiſe, thou art wiſe for thy ſelf.* 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. *Wiſdom to ſalvation.* This, becauſe ſelf is ſo *near* and *dear*, and the immortal Soul ſo unſpeakably precious, the heart being *once ſtampt with a ſpiritual high ſtrong ſelf-love*, will have a mighty influence of warmth abiding on the Spirit.

Here two things are to be attended and practiſed. 1. Meditation of *Salvation* in a *more general Notion* and *Conſideration*, works little or nothing, but the *pondering of particulars* in Salvation: It is a *Rule in Oratory*, and ſo *in Preaching*, that for moving and drawing the affections, generals and *things in a confuſed manner ſpoken, they hit not, work not, draw not.* It is the diſtinct ſeeing and viewing of particulars which moves and affects to purpoſe: So Meditation to be effectual *muſt particularize* the things compriſed, in ſome ſort, in this happineſs and ſalvation: As that ſo *bleſſed freedom from ſin* in the guilt, in pardon, and righteouſneſs, *from the dominion* of ſin, by power, life, image of Chriſt, and holineſs, and the *glorious priviledges* of a Chriſtian here,

here, and *Everlasting Glory* hereafter; and such like.

2. There's *another Rule among Oratours*, that things moving the Affections, they do it either *Magnitudine aut Præsentia*, by their *greatness* or *excellency*, or by their *presence* or *nearness*: As the greatness of a person, or the presence of a person; or the greatness of a *good* or *evil*, or the nearness and presence of it.

1. The *greatness*, the surpassing *greatness* of Salvation, as Scripture sets it forth, *Heb.* 2. That so *unspeakable deliverance* from such a *height*, *breadth*, and *length* of Misery by sin; and that *inexpressible happiness* by *union with Jesus Christ*. The *so great things* of this *glorious state*, should fall by our Meditation upon the Affections, and daily, like *fire from Heaven*, kindle them greatly.

2. Things move by their *presence* or *nearness*: the *remoter* the Object is from the *Faculty*, as the *Objects* of the *External Senses*, as Seeing, Hearing, and the rest; or the farther a thing is apprehended to be, as any *Place*, or *Time*, or the like, the less it *affects*: But the *presence* or *propinquity* of a thing *moves most*, as when a *Poyson* or *dangerous* thing is near or present, as an Antidote or a help when near, when *Death* or *Deliverance* is at hand, when a *Friend* is present, or the like, this moves most. So the way of Meditation here, is by *representing salvation* as *present* or *near*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 1, 2, 3. escaping Hell *as now*, being put into possession of Heaven *as now*; if I were *now* dying, and my Soul sitting on my lips, ready to take its flight *as now*; if *now* the *last Trump* were sounding; *now* Jesus Christ seen *coming* to Judgment; *now* the Sentence

tence of Abſolution paſſing: Let me thus *ſeaſon* and *ſtrengthen* Meditation by this kind of *repreſentation*, ſeeing it *as near*, *as preſent*, *now acting*, *now doing*, or *now having*, and fully *poſſeſſing* this Salvation.

CHAP. V.

Of the Means conducing to this chief End.

THE next thing in *ſpiritual wiſdom*, *to be the Object* of daily Meditation, is to give (as we can) ſome allowance of ſerious thoughts, of that which ſhould be the due and *adequate means*, conducing to the chief End, of Eternal life, with the *glorifying of God*, as formerly we have mentioned.

1. *Chriſt the way.* Therefore the next thing (being the higheſt and uppermoſt of all conducing Means to the Supream End) the next thing I ſay, to be the great Object of Meditation, *muſt be Jeſus Chriſt, our way to the Father, and our higheſt way* of glorifying him: *None comes to the Father*, ſaith Chriſt, *but by me*, *John*---- Initial coming to God by Faith to Juſtification, Reconciliation and Union with God is by Chriſt: All other after comings, and glorifyings of God, are ſtill by Chriſt, as alſo all ſalvation is treaſured up in him: ſo it muſt be the beſt way for our Meditations method, to be daily acted in ſome meaſure upon our mighty Saviour, our great and only way to our great and chief End; ſo he calls himſelf *the way*, *John*---

Here

Here what a moſt *glorious* and *delicious* Object hath the Eye of Meditation?

Chriſt, in *Iſa.* 65. 1. calls, *Behold me, behold me*; ah what a Spirit muſt that be, that for ſuch an infinite Beauty cannot afford *one caſt of the eye, one wiſhly look*, in the whole compaſs of a day; that can look every way freely, fixedly, and unweariedly, but *Chriſtward?*

The Spouſe in the *Canticles*, her *Eye-walk*, was among the Excellencies and Beauties of her Beloved the Lord Chriſt, his pure *Colours*, White and Red, his moſt *rare features* and *exact proportions* of every part, his *Head, Locks, Eyes, Cheeks, Lips, Hands, Legs, and all his glorious perfections*, and then addes to ſum up all, that he is *altogether lovely*: So lovely that her Eye *affected her heart*, and ſo beloved that *ſhe fell ſick of love.*

Ah when a heart is *ſtrongly enflamed* with a Love to Chriſt, the eye will be acted in moſt *wiſhly lookings upon Chriſt*; as the love grows, the earneſt lookings will grow.

Here then the Rule is, to Meditate in ſome due meaſure on this *Glorious Object*, ſo both *infinitely excellent* in himſelf, and ſo mighty a *Saviour unto us.* His *infinite* Riches and Precioufneſs, in his *Natures united*, in his *Offices conferred*, in his *graces fulneſs*, perfect performances, moſt perfect Redemption, his infinite love, pity, willingneſs to ſave loſt Sinners: The ſo great *free offers of himſelf*, and *giving himſelf* to us, *applying* his whole Redemption to us, by his *mighty operation* in us: Some *ſingular ſeriouſneſs* and *vigour* of Meditation cannot but daily be due, as that *firſt* and *chief means* to the chief End. Chriſtians that *leaſt look at Chriſt*, and leaſt diſtinctly view

view him, will make the *ſloweſt progreſs*, and ſuch as ſtudy him moſt, will have the *eaſieſt and moſt expedite coming up to the main Mark.*

CHAP. VI.

Meditation of the Holy Spirit, the Applier of Chriſt and his Redemption.

2. SOme due proportion of *Thoughts-ſerioufneſs* is proper to be daily acted, in reference to the *mighty*, and *only applyer* of the work of Chriſts Redemption, *the holy Spirit*, and *our great daily helper.* The Holy Spirit firſt comes to the Soul and perſon of a Chriſtian, *applies* Chriſt to him, brings *Chriſt* into him, makes him his Temple, and an Habitation of God and Chriſt to dwell in the heart: The Spirit comes, inhabits, ſweeps and cleanſes; furniſhes the heart with *light*, that was *darkneſs*; with *truth*, that was *errour* and *deceitfulneſs*; with *power*, that was *weakneſs*; *life-warmth* and qualifications of heavenly Graces, that was *cold*, *dead*, and altogether *ſinful*, and draws the glorious image of Chriſt upon the Soul: He enlivens, eſtabliſhes, enlarges, and encourages, and fills the Spirit with peace and joy unſpeakable. We act from his *blowings on the Gardens of our hearts, then the ſpices of Graces flow. Cant.* 4. 16.

The Wheels, *Ezek.* 10. 17. *moved from the ſpirit in them*; ſo a Chriſtian moves or not, as the Spirit moves or not. Every day, and for every Duty in the day, there is need of a new blowing of the Spirit,

Spirit, that the Spices may flow: new moving, that the Wheels may move us.

We muſt neither grieve, quench, or reſiſt the Holy Spirit, *Eph.*4.30.1 *Theſ.*5.19.*Act.*7.51. The Spirit who is our Helper and Applyer farther of Chriſt, and receiving of his fulneſs.

If we will act wiſely, the Eye of the Soul by Meditation muſt *daily be pondering* the neceſſity of the Holy Spirits Influences, ſtirrings up, ſtrengthenings, and enlargements: When we neglect and ſlight the Spirit, and *ſo want juſtly his help*, we muſt needs drive on heavily: But when *we mind him* and have his aſſiſtance, this *wings* the Soul and makes it to move *ſtrongly* and *nimbly* to the main mark.

If the Queſtion were askt, what were the *higheſt thoughts* the mind can poſſibly think, they would be ſuch as theſe three following.

1. That thought of the *ſo infinite* and *all admired love* of God the Father, in giving freely his Son for Sinners.

2. That thought of that *infinite* and *all amazing love* of God the Son, in giving ſo freely himſelf for his Fathers Enemies.

3. That thought of God the Holy Spirit's *infinite love*, aſtoniſhing love, in ſo freely giving himſelf into ſuch *dunghill helliſh hearts*, to make them his *glorious Habitation*, his *Palace* and *Solace*, to be the *mighty heart-helper* and *Comforter*. This Spirit then muſt not be grieved by the leaſt neglect, but highly and conſtantly both honoured and cheriſhed, with our utmoſt thought-preciouſneſs and earneſtneſs, that ſo thinkings may work up to *livelieſt* lookings for him, lookings

to

to *liſtenings* for his knockings at the door of our Hearts, liſtenings for ready *lettings* of him in; and being let in we may give him the *higheſt* and *freeſt Entertainments*, with *yieldings* of the fulleſt obedience unto him.

It is reported, that formerly, ſometimes Travellers Sailing by the Coaſts of *Arabia the happy*, have had by the Winds blowing off the Land, ſuch rare rich ſmells, and *perfumes* of the *precious ſpices*, that (without the Experience of it) it is hardly credible. Sometimes the Holy Spirit ſo blows on the Garden of a Chriſtians heart, that the Spices in ſuch ſort perfume it, with Raviſhments of Peace and Joy, that are inexpreſſible, and then it runs apace to the main mark.

Ah then it muſt be beſt to enter on the work of the day, by an *early* and *earneſt* eying of this *glorious Helper*, the Holy Spirit, who is ſooner *ready* to lend us his helping hand, then we are *ready* for it.

CHAP. VII.

Of the next particulars, the incumbent Duties of the day.

3. THE Ordinances of Chriſt are the next general things Meditation may fix on: The Ordinances are *our ways of communion with God*, the ways whereby God conveighs himſelf to us, the King of Heavens *high-ways of ſpiritual Commerce* and *Trade*. The *Roads* and *Paths* wherein the Holy Spirit *walks*, and *comes* to apply himſelf to us; and *our ways* in which we are to go forth and meet him, *apply our ſelves* to him, *fix an heavenly intercourſe* and acquaintance with him.

The Winds blow from all the *Quarters* of Heaven, and the Holy Spirit breaths and blows from all his *heavenly Ordinances*: We may therein look for the breathings of the Spirit, but we muſt not look for the Holy Spirit *out of his own ways*.

The Prerogative of the Spirit is, not to be abſolutely *tied* to Ordinances, but our *liberty*, is not to be *looſed* from them: We are tied to the ways of Chriſt, which are our warrantable ways for communion, and waiting his Spirits comings and aſſiſtings.

The Eye of Meditation ſhould act daily in ſuch freſh and vigorous lookings on the Ordinances, as may more *highly* commend them, *raiſe* their price, *repreſent* them more lovely, *reduce* us to more evenneſs in performance, by finding them more *eaſie* and *ſweet* in continued *uſe*, and *exerciſing* our ſelves in them;

them; and *induce* ſtill higher *admirations*, by experiencing their help and efficacies. The Ordinances of Chriſt have their *high ratification* in the Holy Scriptures for their power and efficacy. The Saints in all Ages, have given their *great confirmation*, ſet their *probatum eſt* to every of them, by millions of encouraging *experiences*.

When that Ordinances are more precious, they are the more efficacious: O let our Meditations daily ſcope be, to make them more *precious*, that they may prove more *efficacious*.

Like that eminent pattern, that great Meditater *David*; that *high progreſs* he made in Meditating of the ways of God, ſet the Price higher, made his heart warmer.

He Meditated and he *valued* more, *admired* more, and he *acted* more eminently, and *arrived* at laſt at that pitch, which hath left him on Record in the *higheſt rank of Saints that ever lived*. The Ordinances therefore are moſt worthy our daily muſing on, as for their own *excellency*, as the King of Heavens high Inſtitutions; ſo, *as the Holy Spirits walks*, wherein he comes to meet us, and have communion with us, and apply *Chriſt* more unto us.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Meditation on the Word of God, and the Promiſes, whereby the Spirit firſt is given, and after works.

THE Word of God is that *ſure wiſdom* reveal-ed unto us by God, to lead us by his Counſel to Glory: That *only infallible Rule* given us to walk by: It is the *Golden Scepter of Chriſt*, for the Subjects of his Kingdom to come and touch the top of: The dear purchaſe of Jeſus Chriſt for the only Rule of his Redeemed; the breathing and dictate of the Holy Spirit; the high product, and that cleareſt ſhining forth of the brighteſt beams of Infinite Wiſdom, Truth, Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, Mercy, Free-Grace, Love, Power, and all Glories and Perfections of the Author, for the bleſſed Ends it is beſtowed.

It is the excellent Inſtrument in the hand of the Spirit, whereby he effects his great Soul-ſaving work; whereby he brings about that work of wonder, the applying of loſt ſinners to an All-ſufficient Saviour firſt, by effectual calling, and then applies Chriſt more and more, building them up more in him unto perfection. If I look for the Spirits operation, I muſt look for, and apply my ſelf to the help of that rare Tool and Inſtrument he operates by. Think what an Engine it is, what moſt admired glorious work he hath effected by it; upon millions of blind Eyes, hard Hearts, Perſons impotent,

tent, Crippled in their Souls, Dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, at the dreadful diſtance from God, of Haters and Enemies of him, and all things leading to him; enlightening them, healing them, and reconciling them to himſelf, and his Word and Ways.

CHAP. IX.

Of Meditation of the Spirits drawing to Chriſt by the Promiſes.

AS it is the Inſtrument in the Spirits hand, and without which it would do nothing, could not awaken, humble, and convert the Soul; ſo it cannot either convert and bring in, or confirm and build up without that moſt ſignal ſweeteſt part, the precious Promiſes; and the Promiſes would do nothing out of the hand of the Holy Spirit, and his efficacious managing of them.

The Grounds and Encouragements of all our drawings near to God through Chriſt by his Spirit in his Ordinances, are the Promiſes of the Goſpel, and the Covenant of Grace.

Sinners muſt not draw nigh to God, without his Warrant and Command firſt given.

But a Command will not be yielded to, unleſs there be the encouragement of a promiſe of an acceptance and help, in both the firſt, and all other after approches to God. *Pſal.* 119. 49. *Gen.* 32. 9. *Exod.* 34. 6. *Num.* 14. 18.

And the Promiſes muſt be managed and ordered by the Holy Spirit, elſe they will have no vigour

or efficacy, as to either initial application of Christ, or to any farther and fuller application of him. *Ephes.* 1. 13. The Spirit is called the *Spirit of Promise*, as given by the Word of Promise, *Gal.* 3. 2. *Received ye the Spirit by the, &c.* 2 *Cor.* 3. 38. The Gospel (that is by the Promises of it) is call'd *the Ministration of the Spirit*; which is not only of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, but the saving operations of it, from its inhabitation.

It is called the Spirit of Promise, as conveying and working all to us and in us by the Promise: Christ and his Grace is not offered by God, nor received by a Christian, by any man (I mean grown up person) but by the offer of him in a Promise: there is no immediate acting upon Christ, for a first, or after and fuller receiving of him, but by the *medium*, the way of an intervening Promise. God holds forth, and Faith sees it, and takes Christ offer'd in the Promise, *Acts* 10. 43. *To him give all the, &c.* As the Spirits humbling, is by his whetting, and setting home by his art, the threatnings of wrath and death Eternal; so the comforts of the Spirit are by his setting home the promises of salvation: And further supplies of Grace are by the promises through the co-operating of the Holy Spirit, bringing us to receive farther of Christ his fulness by the promises, that are *Yea and Amen in him*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. But all this farther operation of the Spirit, and receiving more of the Grace of Christ, it is by Meditation and pondering of the *Promises*.

Fresh receivings from Christ must be founded in fresh Meditation of the *Promises*.

The more intense and earnest the ponderings of the *Promises* of growth and encrease are, the larger will

will your desires, the more earnest your endeavours be after more of Christ.

Christians are sometimes in *great haste to believe strongly, but cannot reach it, because they meditate on the Promises slenderly.* They make *the best work* of it, who dwell and act most upon the promises, that still Meditate *from promise to promise.*

By the Promises, we are made partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4.

Cleanse our selves from all pollution of Flesh and Spirit, perfect holiness in the fear of God, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1.

There be great varieties of precious promises for Justification, Sanctification, and the rest. There is a transcendent Truth, Goodness, and Freeness in the *Promises,* great and rich supplies made over to Believers by them: But they will not *give down* their Milk, without our *due mindings* and *daily Meditatings* on them: Meditation must *press out* the Juice and sweetness, *gather the rare Honey* that is upon these *Flowers of precious Promises.* If Bones be *full of Marrow,* it must be gotten out by *pains* and *knocking*: The *Promises* so full of *marrow* and *sweetness,* must yield it forth by Meditation. Lay *sound weight* of Meditation on them, to *press* out the Spirit and virtue in them.

If therefore a Christian would daily have his recourse to Christ, if he daily would *touch Christ,* so as to have virtue go out of him, for healing and help in any kind; bring your Eye to the hand of the Spirit, and to the Promise, which *he* must be expected to work your coming to Christ by, and fresh receivings of Grace from. *Meditate well, that you may speed well*: Let the *promises mellow in thy heart* by Meditation, that thou mayst find how sweet they this way are.

CHAP. X.

Of the next thing Meditation may beſt take in, which is that on my part I am to perform.

5. IF I would perform in the Day what is *incumbent* on me to be rightly done, I muſt Meditate of the way where the Holy Spirit may meet and help me; Meditate I muſt of my neceſſary putting my hand to the work of *Chriſt*, and *bearing his burden*, and the need I have of the Spirits lending his hand to help me, *who helps our infirmities*: I muſt eye the Rule of the Word, by which the Spirit *teaches me*, and the *precious promiſes* whereby he *encourages me*.

And in that all my converſation in the Day muſt be *holy and heavenly*, *comfortable and fruitful*, I muſt meditate of ſtirring up *the grace given me*, to act by the help of the Spirit, *upon Chriſt*, and *to him*, for *working out my own ſalvation*, and the glorifying of God thereby.

This muſt be (if I conſider) *the living the life of Faith* more peculiarly, and exerciſing of, likewiſe, every Holy Grace the *work of the day* requires: Therefore next, my Meditation may be upon the *Graces*, that in the *Duties of the day*, are to be exerciſed for to be improved.

Without the exerciſing of theſe *Graces* all the converſation is carnal, not ſpiritual, all Duties are but *dead carcaſſes*, and *loathſom to God*. I muſt think how

how my *daily course* must be a *living* to the *living God*; a *living peculiarly to him, that dyed for me, and rose again*; and a *living* to the *blessed Spirit*, that *dwells* and *works* in me, and is my *mighty helper*.

Likewise, I must consider, it must be a *living* very *exemplarily*, towards all men, especially the *godly, that my light may shine before them*, to provoke and profit them all I can.

1. Particularly, I must Meditate of living the life of *precious* and *glorious Faith*, the *Grace of Graces*; Faith as to the *whole word of God*, all the *precepts, promises, threats*, and Recorded Examples; acting more *peculiarly* Faith in the *promises*, and by the *promises* on Jesus Christ, acting more on his All-sufficiency to save, and for receiving fresh *strength* and *supplies* for the Duties and Occasions of the *day ensuing*. Likewise through Christ I should think of my *access* to the Father, of *trusting* to Gods *All-sufficiency*, his *Wisdom, Truth, Righteousness, Holiness, Goodness, Mercy, Love, Free Grace*, and all his *infinite perfections*; with his *providence*, preserving and governing all things, to the least; and toward my own self in particular, in a most excellent, wise, holy, and righteous manner, to the salvation of his people, destruction of his Enemies, and his own Glory.

2. I may Meditate (at least sometimes) of the other *soul-beauties*, of *heavenly Graces*; as of that grand rare *grace of Love*, holy Love; that *which is the fullfilling of the Law*, the great Breeder and Feeder of all Obedience.

Love, which daily as a Fire must be blown up, and made to burn afresh in the heart, and enliven the

daily

daily course: Ah what a Christian may do, by keeping his *heart hot* and *burning* in Love!

3. *Joy.* Meditating of living the life of *heavenly peace and joy, rejoycing in the Lord alway:* Not living the life *of sadness* and *pensiveness*, most unbecoming an *Heir of Eternal Glory.*

4. *Hope.* Meditate also I may of *heavenly Hope, which makes not ashamed, Rom.* 5. 5. *Heb.* 6. 19. *An Anchor sure and firm to ride out all storms:* And of all the Graces, as of *holy Fear, Humility, Meekness, Patience, Contentedness, Zeal, Courage, Constancy*, all the Chain of Graces, mentioned in 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. and other places.

The whole days actings should be *considered* so, as not to be a *complication of vanities, follies, and careless walkings*, but a shewing forth, and shining in the glorious beams of heavenly Graces and Excellencies.

5. Meditate daily I should of *the spiritual dangers* I am surrounded with *by spiritual Enemies:* That principal *and Arch-Enemy the Flesh*, that sin which is connatural to me, *dwells in me, Rom.* 7. *and so easily besets me, Heb.* 12. 1. *that is alway present* and too prevalent; the Fountain and Forge of all other sins; the *Heart Touch-wood* and *Tinder* for temptation: The ground out of which all the *stinking* and *poysonous weeds* of *Lust* grow up; and that ground and foundation of the *deepest tincture* and *grain Colour* of all *soul-defiling Habits*, and customary sins, that so enslave and lead a sinner captive.

2. Of that so *potent Adversary Satan*, his subtlety and depths, vigilancy, and unwearied diligence, whetted by implacable and improving malice. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8.

3. The

3. The *World*, that *Bait* for *Satans Hook*, and great Engine whereby he acts, by the many ſweet *Allurements* on the one hand, and *Determents* on the other hand.

Theſe I muſt every day watch and war with.

Therefore, I muſt daily conſider my helpers, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *Eph.* 6. 13. The Armour of God I muſt put on for every part, and my fighting in the ſtrength of Chriſt, by whom *I may be made more than Conquerour*, *Rom.* 8. 37.

And for the laſt general, there muſt be Meditation of the *unſpeakable preciouſneſs of time*, running on without poſſibility of a ſtand, or leaſt ſtay: With the *Frailty of life*, *Pſal.* 39. 4. with the *uncertainty* of it, and the *certainty* of *death*, and unavoidableneſs of that which will caſt me upon *Eternity*.

Theſe are the more general things, among which my Meditation may take *its walks*, and upon which my ſerioufneſs may daily ſit down to make its ſpiritual advantage by: I muſt adde now things more particular.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of ſome Particulars to be added to the former Generals.

THere are ſome things in particular I may adde, which may help to direct and quicken a Chriſtian in his daily courſe.

1. For the Scripture I daily read, or hear, to endeavour ſome thoughts which may help to *higher quickenings*, and *heart-enlargings*, by farther *freſh ponderings* of the *ſurpaſſing Excellencies* and mighty *Efficacies* of the Scripture; to think of a required *higher riſing eſtimation*, more *inflamed affections* of Love, Joy, Hope, Longing, and the reſt, ſeen and ſo obſervably conſpicuous in the Saints in Scripture; to light our Candle by their flame: And the more *rooted reſolution* I ſhould take up and engage in, to be more (by my looking into the Glaſs of the Word) *transformed into the image of it*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 18.

Of Faith in the Word. I ſhould farther think of that Faith I am neceſſarily to act, in the *truth* and *certainty*, and *uſefulneſs of the Word*, I now am to be exerciſed in; and of my mixing of Faith more abundantly with it, *Heb.* 4. 2. As to any Doctrine, Precept, Promiſe, Threatning, or Examples, and whatever is there related for my uſe.

Of Wiſdom. I ſhould think alſo of the *Wiſdom* which that I read requires, in ſelecting that out is moſt conducible, is my proper portion, and beſt fitting my ſouls condition. As *Samuel* at his Feaſt, ſet

ſet forth ſomething peculiar for *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 9. 23, 24. *Joſeph* cauſed to be prepared for his Brother *Benjamin*, *Gen.* 43. 34. God will now be ſeen, if wiſdom be uſed to hold forth a peculiar prepared portion. Some *Eye-ſalve* to annoint mine Eyes, *Rev.* 3. 18. ſome *rich Balm* to heal ſome ſore, ſome *corroſive* to eat out ſome proud fleſh, ſome *Cordial* for a ſtrengthener and chearer, ſome piece of *ſpiritual treaſure* to enrich me, ſome *rare Jewel* for ornament wanting to me; ſomething there is now in my hand, for my now *ſpiritual advantage*, if I can ſee it; and ſee it I may, by that which muſt be the *Auxiliary* and conſtant *Aſſiſtant* of my reading, if I would meet with a due profiting, which is my conſcientious and careful pondering, weighing, and weighing this pure Gold, ſtored up in Chriſts rich Treaſury to make me rich.

Reading brings me Meat, Meditation brings forth the ſweetneſs.

Reading brings the Coals to the Wood, Meditation makes the flame.

Reading brings me the Sword of the Word, Meditation whets it.

Reading barely, proves pouring water into a *Sieve*; Meditation is putting Gold into a Treaſury, the former lets the Water out, the latter locks the Gold up.

O let me read much, but let me alſo Meditate much, that Meditation and Reading may be *commenſurate*; my Souls *digeſtion* proportioned to its *Reception*, its taking in by Reading; let me Read and Meditate, that I may not have a *meagre*, *lean ſoul*, like them that have an *eager* appetite, and a *weak digeſtion*; but that it may be fat and well-liking,

liking by this good digestion of due Meditation.

2. Some lively and vigorous Meditation should be daily performed, in *reference* to private Prayer; I say for assistance and furtherance of secret *Closet-Prayer*, that so *important* and sweet Soul-Exercise.

1. Of that *importancy* and concernment, that the *main stress* both of the whole work, and likewise of the hearts after warmth and life in the day, lies greatly on it.

2. Of that heavenly sweetness, that it is the chief way of our *private* familiarity with God.

3. Of that *excellency*, that it is our only way of *private speaking* unto the great God, of having the high honour and favour of *whispering in his ear*, access in private to his *bosom and bowels*, and the *chief way* of procuring his private *Signet* and *Seal* of blessed assurance of happiness. The way it is of the souls freshest, freest, and most elevated actings; such as oft-times praying in company must not, cannot bear, and the way of strong *high Exercise* of sundry Graces.

1. It sends *private Embassies* daily to the King of Heaven by Faith.

2. It carries up daily the soul to Heaven in a *Chariot of fire* by love; and

3. It leaves continually an *Agent* in the Court of Heaven by Hope.

Its the great *heart-warmer* by privacy, giving the greater advantage of *importunity*, without any check from the presence of others.

The great heart-humbler, *Melter down* and *Refiner*, instrumentally, by actings of sound and kindly

kindly *Repentance*: Making the droſs and embaſing mixtures of Corruptions and Luſts to paſs away, and the heart become purer.

Its the peculiar *advantage* to learn and act the rare art and ſecret of wreſtling with God, and returning with the high encouragements of *holy overcomings* of him.

It is the way of the *rareſt hours*, *higheſt* ſoul-Raptures, *richeſt* pourings in of comforts, and moſt *happy experiencings* of the deſcendings down of Heaven in pureſt, ſweeteſt, largeſt *ſoul-ſatieties*.

Therefore for *richeſt* furniſhing us with fitteſt matter for a beſt heart frame to perform this daily duty, performing it in the moſt ſpiritual and effectual manner, for doing it, as to *out-do* former, all former doings, we muſt look to lay the Foundation *deeper and larger* in better and more ſuited Thinkings and Meditatings, *think to the utmoſt, to pray to the beſt.* The ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies, as divers of the Learned ſay, both Meditation and Prayer. Firſt it ſignifies Meditation, and then by a Metonymy of the Cauſe for the Effect, it ſignifies Prayer. To ſhew what Prayers ſhould be ſtill preſented to the great God, ſuch as have ſome due *weight of Meditation*, which are *made out* and *made up* of Meditation, or have at leaſt the beſt ſeriouſneſs we can. That *great* man of *Prayer*, the Pſalmiſt *David*, ordinarily calls his *Prayer* his *Meditation*; and peculiarly his *Prayer* in the morning (the foundation of the following days work) *his Meditation*, *Pſal.* 5. 1, 2. in that excellent and warm beginning of that *Pſalm*: Prayer and Meditation, like *Hippocrates* Twins, born, lived, and died together; ſo *Meditation* and *Prayer* riſe, and warm, and

grow

grow fervent; or cool, fall, and decay together: *Prayer* cherishes *Meditation*, *Meditation* feeds *Prayer*.

O let my Spirit be still warmed, inflamed, and melted down in Meditation, that it may run and flow and flame in this *heavenly devotion*, and both issue in my daily wiser and warmer working out salvation.

3. My serious and curious Mindings must make sure to single out, and set in full view *that* or *those* things I *particularly want*, and are most proper and necessary for the *now*, *for my souls present state*.

There is no godly man, but hath ever something which concerns him most.

Some *corruption stirring* that must be subdued, some *Temptation* to be encountred, some *Grace* to be endeavoured, some *comfort* or *help* supplyed.

It may be many things may be the present, if not *urgent* concerns.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Meditation of daily ſelf-denyal.

IN the next place let me *Meditate* of what I want as to *ſelf-denial and Mortification*, evidenced by the weeds of corruptions coming up in my ſpirit, *Mar.* 8. 34. or ready ever and anon to ariſe and get ground, and all ſtill upon that *grand intereſt* of ſelf, or the Reliques of the *Roots* or *Stumps* of it: This which hath not been ſpoken to, this ſelf-intereſt, the taking of it *down* in my heart, is one of the *greateſt concernments* Meditation daily ſhould fix upon: Self is the *great Hinge* the carnal heart hangs and turns upon: There the *Center* is ſelf, the *Circumference* ſelf, all the *lines* are drawn from ſelf and to ſelf.

Self is the *great Rival* and *Competitioner* with the infinitely ſurpaſſing God, and contends for ſuperiority with him, yea ſelf *ſits* in the Throne, *wears the Crown, holds the Scepter*, and ſelf is the ſinners *all in all*.

1. All *poſitive actings* in *ſenſualities*, *pride*, and *covetouſneſs*, and *other evils* are but to ſatisfie ſelf.

2. All *negative* ways and omittings of good, are but to *gratifie ſelf*, to *eaſe ſlothful ſelf*, loth to be put to ſtir, leaſt willing to labour, toil, or ſtrive, leaſt of all to loſe, ſmart, and ſuffer.

Self *claps the great ſtrong Biaſs* on the ſoul, is the ſpreading *prevailing poyſon* in it, and empoyſons it all over.

Self is higheſt in the *eſtimation*, nothing paſſes at ſo high a rate, not God himſelf.

Self is *higheſt in the affection*, nothing ſo near as ſelf.

Self is *higheſt in the purpoſe* and *intention*, nothing ſo aimed at as ſelf.

Self *in the converſation*, it hath the endeavours, earneſtneſs, and equality: It is like the moſt dangerous ſeiſing, deep rooting, and ſpreading poyſon, of greateſt virulency and prevalency: Thus it is in a natural heart. In a holy heart, though the *moſt high God*, by the power of Grace, be now higheſt, really chief, yet that remaining part of ſelf, the pieces left behind, oft as it were do *juſtle him*, frequently juſtle him, to get his place and ſit uppermoſt, for what do ſins, when our minds, wiſdom, deſires, and wills, and our ways, when they thwart and croſs his mind, wiſdom, will, and ways, but as it were *juſtle* him, and ſtrive to be uppermoſt?

Hereby ſelf ſometimes (out of careleſneſs) ſelf it ſeems to have regained the Throne, and repoſſeſt it ſelf of the ſoveraignty loſt.

In the beſt heart there is ſo much of this bitter Root ſpringing out, ſo much of this *ſoul-bane*, ſo much of this *Touch-wood*, *Tinder*, *Powder* to preſently take, and inſtantly blow up, ſo much of this *Idol*, this *Dagon* ſet ſo near the Ark, that it hath need of the greateſt daily mindings and ponderings, as the greateſt Enemy that hath gained the greateſt advantage of us, it lies ſtill in our *Boſoms*: Its like the *worm* that breeds and feeds of the Bodies own fleſh: This of all others is the *greateſt Idol*; I ſay, ſelf is the greateſt Idol that ever was or will be. There's no *Image of Jealouſie* like it in the Eye of a God,

God, therefore no one thing requires a more daily minding, for a daily watchfulneſs; Mindings for the *effectual help* and relief againſt all *particular luſts*, which are but the leſſer Branches of the great Root of ſelf, the *Scouts* and *Forragers* ſent forth from the *Head-quarter* of ſelf.

This ſelf it is that is the great *correſpondent* and *confederate* with Satan; if ſelf were not the ground within, of his attempts from without, he could do nothing.

The *Mathematician* boaſtingly ſaid, tell me but where I may place my Engine, and I will ſhake the Earth. Satan knowing where to place his Engine, knows how to ſhake us and worſt us, if we watch him not, and this ſelf.

I muſt mind it moſt, and truſt it leaſt; labour the *moſt peremptory* and *conſtant denyings* of it, and as my higheſt wiſdom, to mortifie particular Luſts that are all fed from this *great Root*, and likewiſe to keep off Satan from this *advantage ground*.

I have it may be enlarged too far upon this: very brief I ſhall be on thoſe that remain.

CHAP. XIII.

Of ſome other particulars which may be ſometimes Meditated upon in the day.

1. *A particular ſin.* IT will be my wiſdom to conſider *that ſin or corruption* which troubles me moſt, which out of this ſpring of ſelf and ſinful intereſt is more apt to *owſe* out of my heart, and make *a breach* in the Banks that Chriſt by his grace hath made there. That particular evil which is ſo ſtrong, ſtirring, and ſtriving, to carry me down the ſtream and keep me under: *I was upright*, ſaith the Prophet, *Pſal.* 18. 23. *before him, and kept my ſelf from mine iniquity*; that ſin which had been of peculiar prevalence, and would be ſo again; the ſin that had ſpecial edge and eagerneſs, too oft appearing and endeavouring it, attempting to make its eſcape from his watch, his heart-keeping, and appear in act and power.

There is ſome corruption or evil in every ſpirit, which like ſome *rank weed* in the Garden is ſtill putting up, or ready to put forth, like ſome *leak in a Veſſel*, ready to run out by it.

This needs a *ſpecial minding* and *conſidering* ſutable to its dangerouſneſs, as that which will be a *thorn* in the Foot, hinder our going, work diſquiet, daſh our confidence before God, and weaken our hands from our work.

I muſt peculiarly conſider this daily, that it get not at any time ground of me, but that I gain upon it more,

more, that I *watch* it, *fight* it, look that this *Gangreen* ſpread not, *run not up* to my heart, but that I ſtop and kill it.

Minding it duly will provoke to endeavour a right courſe, for the juſt cure and ſound healing of it.

Meditation may be alſo of what other evils are *buſie in my boſom*, what are *ſtirring moſt*, what are *getting any ground*, and what are *loſing it*.

2. *What graces I want*, or have moſt need of, to enable me more to lift up the Name of Chriſt, ſweeten my ſpirit with peace, eaſe my courſe, and render me more ſerviceable to others.

Every day I ſhould *well attend* to what Goſpel Ornaments and Jewels I ought to put on and wear before others, to make my converſation ſhine, *Col.* 3. 12. 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7.

Pliny reports of *Poppæa*, the *Wife of the Roman Emperour Nero*, that when ſhe was to go abroad, ſhe ſtill would be deckt and adorn'd with ſuch *abundance* and *varieties* of moſt precious Stones and Jewels, as it dazled the eyes of the Beholders.

And I have read of a like manner, of the *Mogul* or *great Emperour* in the *Eaſt-Indies*; who if on ſome ſpecial times he ſits out to be ſeen by the Common people, he puts on ſuch great *numbers* of *Diamonds*, *Carbuncles*, *Rubies*, and other *gliſtering* and *glorious Jewels*, as they cannot without great admiration behold him, yea can hardly, by reaſon of the Suns ſhining and *reflections*, diſcern his face, the *glory* of the Jewels is ſo great. Chriſtians muſt conſider their putting on, and wearing the *rich Ornaments* and *Jewels* of *heavenly graces*, to ſhine gloriouſly in them, and take the Eyes of all that behold

them with the discoveries of the Soul inward Beauties of *Faith*, *Love*, *Hope*, *Joy*, *Fear*, *Humility*, *Meekness*, *Patience*, *Contentedness*, *heavenly mindedness* and *rest*, to the glory of Christ, in whose beams of Beauty and Glory they ever should shine.

3. When holy *David* in his *course of Meditation*, after matters of his *private concernment*, closes so ordinarily the whole Meditation, with that *grand interest of Zion*, the Churches case; may not this be then a *Rule to our Meditation*, for a high demonstration of our *publick spiritedness*, our constant mindings of that *superlative* and *transcendent interest* of God in this world, the glory of his great Name in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the people given to him, their *peace*, *prosperity*, and *glory*, and the disappointments of all their Enemies Designs, which also is *an Article* in their Heavenly Jointure?

Some other particulars might farther be mentioned to be taken in by Meditation; such as *matters* of our *callings* and *daily converse* in varieties of Companies and Friends, and how to be right Christian in them, excell in improving them to their proper uses and ends, for the glory of God.

4. *Meditation for review of the work of the day.* There remains but one thing more to be added, namely, in the close of the day, should be, or is fit to be, that *Meditation of review*, or that overlooking of matters in the foregoing day, to make a happy closing it up, by a *fresh humbling* our selves, and returning to God, and acting *new Recumbencies* on his free, rich grace in Christ, by the precious promises, to sweeten our lying down.

5. And in the Night season, that great time with

David

David and others of the Saints, *When I awake, let me be ever with God, and my Meditation of him ſweet. Pſal.* 139. & *Pſal.* 104.

The ſum of that hath been mentioned about daily Meditation, is

1. To enter the Duty at our *awaking* with *Reflections* on the matters of the Night paſt, the preſervations and comforts eſpecially of that time.

2. To look forward to the *incumbencies* of the coming day, and how beſt to redeem it; by Endeavour

1. To act a *freſh ſetting up* the ſupreme end of glorifying God.

2. To have a *ſerious muſing* on the *next end*, my own Eternal Happineſs.

3. Then to mind the *proportionate means* to the mark or end I aim at.

1. Therefore firſt to look wiſhly at the *fullneſs of Chriſt*, freely offered, as the way to God and happineſs.

2. To Meditate on *our mighty helper* the Holy Spirit; the great Applyer of Redemption.

3. Meditations on the *Ordinances of Chriſt*, the walks and ways the Holy Spirit comes in, and applies Chriſt to the Soul by.

4. Meditation of *the Word and Promiſes* which the Spirit in the Ordinances uſeth, as the *peculiar inſtruments* of drawing the heart to Chriſt, and of applying him daily more.

5. Meditation of the *ſeveral Graces* to be continually (on the occaſions requiring) exerciſed and improved.

6. Meditation *of our ſpiritual Enemies*, the Fleſh within, Satan and the World without.

More particularly.

1. Meditating in *reference to reading* the Holy Scripture, with thoſe *graces* I am to exerciſe in my Reading.

2. The *Meditation private Prayer* calls for, if I pray before reading, or when I can and am any time in the day to pray privately.

3. Meditation of what is the *chief grace* I am defective in, or the *peculiar bleſſing* I want at preſent.

4. Meditation of *the grand intereſt* of God, as relating to his Church in the world.

5. The *Meditation of review*, or ſelf-examination in reference to things of the day paſt.

Theſe heads I have mentioned, not to impoſe on any, as to *matter* or *method* abſolutely, but to propoſe ſome things, which if not alway neceſſary, yet that may be performed, in ſome degree, as *ability* and *opportunity* admits.

Divers of the particulars (if daily Meditation be judged *neceſſary* by us) I am ſure then they muſt be judged *neceſſary* for ſuch as daily will obſerve it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Sabbath, and Lords day.

THere now remains but one thing more to be added to what hath been ſaid concerning daily Meditation, namely, the Meditation relating to that *eminent day of God*, firſt the *ſeventh day of the week*, now in the New Teſtament times changed to, and *called the firſt day* of the week, and the Lords-day.

1. As to the riſe, nature, ends, and advantages the Sabbath in the Old Teſtament, and the Lords-day in the New, it is the *beſt day* that ever the world ſaw, or ſhall be ſeen on this ſide Heaven.

2. It was and is that day wherein the *infinite Glories* and *Excellencies* of a God, have ſhined brighter and warmer on the ſpirits of men, than in any other days beſide; namely his infinite Wiſdom, Power, Love, Goodneſs, Mercy, and Riches of free Grace.

3. The Sabbath, *as ſome judge*, had its riſe ſo early as in Paradiſe, or when man was in ſtate of innocency; it muſt then be of very great Antiquity, and a *rarity* of *great worth*. And,

4. Then it muſt be that *only holy day* which man in ſtate of innocency had; and poſſibly, if he had ſtood, ſhould ever have had afterward.

5. After the firſt inſtitution it had the moſt glorious and *tremendous promulgation* and *ſanction*, ſuch

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a delivery and ratification, as no other Law (except those that were spoken at the same time) ever had, namely, by Gods so wonderful and most astonishing appearance on Mount *Sinai*, in the sight of six hundred thousand persons: There it was one of the *ten words* spoken by Gods own mouth, by God first spoken in *the ears* of all that so prepared and awakened numerous multitude, and after in the Mount was *written with the finger of God*, written on the *first Table* of Stone, before the six Commandments of the *second Table*. This Commandment thus written, was with the others *reserved in the Golden Ark*, or Chest, made purposely by *Moses* from Gods Command to keep the Tables, and then by Gods Appointment *was to be preserved* in the glorious Tabernacle made by *Moses*, and there it was to be with highest honour prefer'd to be kept in the *Holy of Holies*.

6. *Though some yield it not*, yet others judge the Sabbath had its change, from the seventh to the first day of the week, by the Lord of the Sabbath, Christ himself, or at least by his Apostles from his Authority.

7. However it be changed, yet it is lookt upon as grounded on that *so amazing part* of our Redemption, Christs so glorious Resurrection on the third day after his Passion.

8. The Sabbath formerly was the Old Testament Churches fixed time, to behold as in a mirrour the *glory of God the Creator*, his Eternal Godhead, Power, Wisdom, Goodness, and most glorious Excellencies, in the so admirable frame of Heaven and Earth, and the so various and curious pieces in it, all most exquisitely wrought and finisht.

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It was the peculiar time for ſetting up *the Ladder* of the Creatures by Contemplation to climb from Earth to Heaven with.

But now changed into the firſt day of the week, it is the Chriſtian Churches time for beholding as in a mirrour, *the glory more peculiarly of God the Redeemer*; now not in his Humiliation, but in his appearing and begun Exaltation in that his glorious Reſurrection from the dead, that his concerned people might joy with higheſt and moſt heavenly rejoycing, for this riſing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, to be under the warmeſt and moſt vivifical beams of his infinite love.

9. Let me Meditate of this day, as the time afforded for *largeſt ſpiritual advantages*, no day being ſo eminent for me and my Soul as this day.

10. Let me Meditate of this day as that happy ſeaſon, wherein the Ordinances of *Chriſt do run in a fuller higher, and ſtronger current.*

More is offered me on this *great ſoul-mart day* than on other common Market-days, other week-day opportunities; it is the day whereby in ſome reſpects I have *far better Ordinances*, the Publick; in Communion with Chriſt, in the midſt, among thoſe that are *gathered together* in his Name.

And then by the Publick *I have better advantages for the Private*, to perform them better. Private Duties having a better time and better helps, I muſt thereby be minded of my better performance.

11. It is the eminent day of *meeting with God* in his *upper walks* of more ſolemn Ordinances.

12. The day of days for our *beſt ſpeaking* with our God, and of *higheſt familiarity* with him.

13. It's the great time of our *hearing* from God,

and

and having him moſt eminently to ſpeak to us: There be no hearings from God like this days hearings, no ſuch voice, no ſuch efficacy can be expected as on this day.

14. It is the day wherein *God ſits out*, and is moſt to be ſeen; the great day of *ſeeing Gods* goings in the Sanctuary, ſeeing his Power and his Glory: No ſuch day for this as the Lords own day. *Pſ.* 63. 2.

15. A day of *feeding more on the Feaſt of fat things full of Marrow*, *Iſa.* 25. 6. *Of being brought into the Kings Banquetting-Houſe*, *having the Banner of Chriſts love ſpread more amply over us*, than at other times, it being the day wherein the higheſt flamings up of his *unſpeakable love appeared*, in that he not only died, but roſe again from the dead, without which all his other labour and ſufferings had been loſt, and our ſouls been alſo loſt, 1 *Cor.* 15.

16. It is a day *dropt down from Heaven*, may ſerve to give a *taſte* of the Sabbath and day kept there, and to ſet a Copy for us here to write after, in our holy reſtings and actings, attended with heavenly refreſhings.

God that made all things, when he had finiſhed his work, he *then reſted* on the ſeventh day, and with *his example* of reſting, gave the *precept* of ſanctifying the ſeventh day to the Church of the Old Teſtament.

And *the Lord of the Sabbath*, Chriſt Jeſus, reſting *from his work*, and riſing the firſt day of the week, *gives the Example*, and with the *Example* the *Precept* of reſting and keeping holy the firſt day of the week to the Church of the New Teſtament, *as ſome think*, which therefore, *Rev.* 1. 10. *they ſay* is called the

the Lords day, as the Ordinance of the Supper is called *the Lords Supper*, as inſtituted by him.

17. It is the day of *reſting the body* from labour, of *reſpiteing the mind* from worldly thoughts and cares, and of *refreſhing the ſpirit* with heavenly Manna, which rains down now on this day more plentifully; and with water of life that runs more abundantly in the pure Channels of holy Ordinances.

18. Meditated on it ſhould be, as the ſeaſon of the beſt *reciprocations*, mutual actings between Earth and Heaven, wherein the ſoul hath the advantage of acting higher and more vigorouſly, to glorifie and pleaſe God, *Pſal.* 24. 5. and wherein God commands the bleſſing more, and affords aſſiſtances more uſually than on any other days, as experiences prove.

19. Its a time to come from *ſweeter* and *fuller* communion with God in Chriſt (whoſe bleſſed day it is) to come with our faces ſhining and hearts flaming, *made better* to be on Earth, *fitter to live* in Heaven: And hereupon

20. To leave upon the ſpirit a more *eager longing* fully to enjoy the *Lord of the Sabbath*, and have time turned wholly into Eternity.

Theſe or ſuch like Meditations may be ſutable and quickening for improving the *great opportunity* of this day of Chriſt, and we cannot think too much, or too ſeriouſly for this great occaſion.

Having in ſome meaſure thus endeavoured to open and illuſtrate this point of daily Meditation, both that which may be ſutable for the ſix days, and for the Lords day, I paſs to the next ſort, Occaſional Meditation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of Occasional Meditation, and that which is more extraordinary.

SOlemn Occasional Meditation comes now to be considered, which is the souls taking of time for, and acting Meditation on some particular selected subject, either out of the Word of God, or among the Works of God, or something *providentially* falling out, or something concerning our selves, any thing offering fit occation for fruitful Meditation.

They may be chiefly referr'd to these two heads.

1. Either such things as *purposely* we (out of *varieties* of subjects before us) do single out for Meditation, to help and quicken us in godliness.

2. Or some *new fresh thing*, which the hand of Gods Providence holdeth forth, for our particular observing and improving.

1. That which we our selves, out of varieties of subjects, may or do single out for our spiritual advantage.

Here the *scope* and *compass* our Eye hath to make its choice of, and fix upon is very large: The Eye in Meditation hath before it the *fullest*, *fairest prospect* can come in view: Here is a breadth, length, depth, height, a compass and circumference that in point of *lawful liberty*, you may look from Earth to Heaven, yea through the whole world, in all its vastness, and varieties of objects in it; and *beyond* them

them all, unto *him* that is ſo infinitely *above* them all, God himſelf, in all his ſo *inconceivable* exaltations and perfections.

O how *narrow* then muſt that Spirit be, which ſhall be ſtraitned and *at a loſs*, for matter to employ and buſie its ſeriouſneſs about?

That hath ſo large a Field to walk in, and ſo *great varieties*, as the vaſt world, Heaven and Earth, and all things in them; and the *infinite God*, with ſo many infinite excellencies as are in him, and yet to ſeek how to Meditate? Ah how barren, low, and poor muſt that ſpirit be which is enriched with ſo great proviſions for *mind and thought entertainment*, and for *times improvement*, and yet cannot fruitfully employ it ſelf, on ſome one thing or other that preſents it ſelf to us, and *invites* our ſeeing and pondering of it.

Although Meditation hath ſo great a *Latitude* and liberty; a liberty to travel farther, and ſee more by far than all the great Travellers that have bin in the world: yet *ſpiritual wiſdom* teacheth us to *endeavour* the moſt advantageous way of engaging our *thinking power* in Meditation. For the wiſdom of this way we now are upon, it needs muſt lie *in that manner and order*, as moſt may conduce to the great and main end of glorifying God, and our own ſalvation. It is moſt true, that in point of *liberty* it is my Chriſtian priviledge to take and ſet before me *any profitable ſubject* to intend my thoughts upon, when no particular occaſion of Meditation doth otherwiſe oblige me: I ſay, when no particular *contrary obligation* is upon me, I may chuſe to meditate either on this or that uſeful ſubject as I pleaſe.

I have the whole Creation for my *Eye-walk*, my Medi-

Meditation, and ſpirits recreation: yea, and farther than the whole world extends; I may go to contemplate him that is the higheſt; if I pleaſe, like *David* and other Saints of God, I may with my Eye walk and look among the Works of God, the ſo excellent and unimitable pieces of his moſt admirable framing: On all the ſo *ſtately Fabrick* of the World, any of the *rare built ſtories* lower or higher, any of the *rich Furnitures* or exquiſite things contained in it.

Firſt I may view the *lower ſtory* wherein I am; fix upon the precious things the Earth hath *within*, the riches of Minerals and precious Metals, Silver, Gold, and the ſo uſeful other ſorts; the riches of all ſorts of precious Stones, Diamonds, Carbuncles, Rubies, Emeralds, and all the reſt.

I may view the innumerable exquiſite things *upon the Earth*, from the *Moſs* and *imperfect Plants*, to the Graſs made for the Cattel, to all things growing in the whole Garden of Nature, and *more peculiarly* made for the ſervice of man; among all the *Herbs*, *Flowers*, *Shrubs*, and *Trees* of all ſorts, and ſee in them the ſo *fair Characters* of the infinite Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of the great Creator, written moſt legibly on them.

I may Meditate on all ſorts of living Creatures, from the leaſt and *loweſt Mite* or *Inſect*, all creeping things, with all Beaſts and Birds, that go upon the Earth, wild or tame.

Conſider I may their ſeveral Natures, Features, and Shapes, Beauties, and Excellencies; and withall, the ſerviceableneſs and uſefulneſs of them, to that poor *Clod of earth*, *man*, for whom they are.

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I may look to the Waters, Fountains, Rivers, and vaſt Seas, with the innumerable things and Creatures about and in them, Fowls, Fiſhes, and theſe of ſo many Kinds, Forms, and Shapes; all of them the demonſtrations of the infinite glories of that unimitable Artiſt the great God. My Meditation alſo may, with the Pſalmiſt, take in the *eternal and mighty Hills and Mountains*, with the *Rocks*, *Sands*, *and Bulwarks* made againſt the raging Seas, *that they return not again to cover the earth*, *Pſal.* 104. 9.

I may go up to the *higher ſtories* of this *Fabrick of the World*, to the *Waters above*, to the *Clouds* and their *Bottleings up of Waters* in them, and that ſo *great wonder* in Nature, the *inviſible* and ſo *powerful Wind*, which carries the Clouds from place to place, whereby they at length open, fall down, and water the thirſty Earth with Dews and Showrs; they alſo ſerve to purge and purifie the Air we breathe in.

I may eye other ſorts of *Meteors* or *Exhalations*, and things appearing in the Air, as thoſe *fiery* and *dreadful ſometimes impreſſions*, making us to wonder; the *falling* Stars, *flying* Dragons, *fiery dartings* of ſome, and *fixing ſtanding* brightneſſes of others, of ſeveral ſhapes. To all theſe I may adde that *Voice of God*, the *fearful Thunder*, and the *concomitant Coruſcations* and *Lightnings*; *Lightnings* alſo ſometimes alone; all theſe are mighty and ſtupendious operations of the great God.

Higher yet I may go, to another *higher ſtory*, that of the *Starry Heaven*; contemplate the ſo innumerable *Stars* of ſeveral glories, and wonderful *motions* & *influences*, with the *beauteous Moon* to ſhine by Night, & her *changings*, *encreaſings*, and *decreaſings*, and *hidings*;

and that *Eye of the World*, the *most glorious Sun*, all ſo admirably meditated upon by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 8. *Pſ.* 19. *Pſ.* 104. *Pſ.* 136.

I may go yet one *ſtep higher* to that *third Heaven*, the *Palace of God*, where alſo *Chriſt is* in his humane Nature exalted, and appearing in higheſt glory: It is alſo the *native place* of the glorious Angels, and the place of *happy reception*, entertainment, and habitation, *of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect*, *Heb.* 12. 23. But of this more particularly hereafter.

But among all, I may *more peculiarly muſe*, and in *muſing* greatly *wonder* at that one thing, namely *Man*, *Pſ.* 8. the making of him in ſo *great excellency*, and all things in the World for his uſe and ſervice; *all for a little ſpeck of duſt*, with a *link ſpark* in it of an *immortal ſoul*. O what is man, *that God ſhould be ſo mindful of him*, and do ſo for him! But *O what muſt man then be*, that *ſo little minds God*! and what muſt that man be, that does not, that *cannot or rather will not* find mind Employment, how to engage and act that *rare endowment* the *thinking power*, in the rich and ample proviſions purpoſely made for *objects* of *mind entertainment*? All this being then my *Eye-ſcope*, and having ſo great *varieties of Eye-walks*, ſo large a latitude to exerciſe my *thinkings*, ſo profitably to act this holy Duty of Meditation, I am left wholly (if I neglect it) without all excuſe.

If I ſtill daily let my thoughts *run* and *ravel* out in *vanities* and *impertinencies*, and can fix no where uſefully for my *ſpiritual good*.

But in that multitudes of things may breed confuſion, prudence muſt direct to find out the beſt method

method and order, that ſo I may meditate with more *eaſe*, *pleaſure*, and *advantage*. My *beſt Wiſdom* therefore is to conſider of the *fitteſt way*, if not in it ſelf, yet at leaſt for my particular abiſity and times.

1. As either to meditate of *ſome portion* or paſſage of holy Scripture, *ſome Precept*, *Promiſe*, *Threatning*, *Direction*, *Encouragement*, or *Example*, or ſome *Grace*, *Virtue*, *Vice*, or *Sin*: And for more delight and help, meditate I may *by ſetting one contrary againſt another*; as one Promiſe being ſingled, or ſome of the Promiſes, I may turn upon the Threatnings: If I meditate upon a *Reward* and *Bleſſing* given to any, turn I may to the *Puniſhment* and *Evils* that have been inflicted, or are threatned; *Reward* on *Obedience*, and *Puniſhment* on *Diſobedience*.

2. Meditate I may *over the heads and chief points of Religion* in order, as *I can* ſet them; or as ſome ſhort Bodies of Divinity and Catechiſms compriſe them.

3. Or ſomething of the *Works of the great God*, as *Creation*, that ſo amazing and utterly inconceivable Work, ſet out as it is in *Geneſis* the firſt, and in other Scriptures: Or *Providence*, God's ſo ſtrange and admirable *preſervation* and *governing* of all things in the World, from the greateſt to the leaſt in it, and about it, every motion, mutation, and diſpoſing of it to a ſure end, his own higheſt glory.

4. Or ſomething particularly *of my own ſpiritual condition*, for my more peculiar benefit. As,

1. Something which may *make me wiſer to ſalvation*, and adde to my Treaſure of ſpiritual truths.

2. Something may *make me warmer*, and encreaſe my heat of holy affection.

3. Or ſomething which *may ſtrengthen and fix my ſouls great purpoſe* of walking with God, and render me a more highly reſolved perſon for Heaven.

4. I ſhould as a *grand buſineſs*, the affair of chief concernment, meditate frequently and moſt ſeriouſly about the *caſe of my ſoul*, how in very deed it is, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. both without any *ſelf flattery* on the one hand, or *ſelf injury* on the other hand, *Pſal.* 36. 2. Neither making my *ſelf* and *ſtate better* than it is, nor *worſe* than it is, *Lam.* 3. 1. That I may not on any *miſtake be confident*, *preſuming fondly*, *John* 2. 4. nor *diffident*, deſponding and diſcouraged weakly.

5. I muſt frequently meditate of the *evil* and *moſt deceitful* heart, that *arch cheater* I continually carry in my boſom, and therefore am *never to be ſecure*, but alway *awakened* for fear of its *falſeneſs* and *deceits*: Meditate therefore of that ſo excellent Scripture, *Jer.* 17. 9. *The heart, &c.* Therefore I ſhall more largely ſpeak to it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Meditation ſhould often be of the hearts great deceitfulneſs.

MEditation ſhould be very frequent *of the hearts great deceitfulneſs.* The *right* and *beſt* way of this *Meditation*, lieth in theſe four particular paths.

1. In pondering the *infallible certainty* of it, and *particulars* in it.

2. Pondering the *ſad condition* every one is under by it.

3. Weighing the *ſad attendants* and conſequences.

4. The *way of deliverance* and *relief.*

1. It is beſt here to begin with the *Meditation* of the *infallible certainty*, of this ſo ſuperabounding *heart deceitfulneſs.*

1. This firſt is to be minded, as that *which is aſſerted ſo by a God*, for whom *it is impoſſible to lie*, *Heb.* 6. being infinitely *wiſe*, *holy*, *righteous*, and *good*; he affirms it, and that *before*, and *to the very faces of all perſons*: He hath *written*, *recorded* it in his Scripture of truth; he *hath commanded* all perſons *to read* what he hath there *recorded*; he hath *preſerved miraculouſly* theſe *Records* againſt all *haters* and *oppoſers*, *Men* and *Devils*; and among other ends, that men may have a *Glaſs*, a *perfect undeceiving Glaſs*, to ſhew men that they never would or could ſee or believe, if God had not held this

Glaſs to them, and made the true and lively repreſentation of the *hearts deceitfulneſs above all things* by it.

2. Theſe *Scripture aſſertions* of the *hearts deceitfulneſs*, are from that God, who is the only both *heart-framer* and *heart-ſearcher* and *knower*, *Pſ.* 33. 15. having his Eye, *omniſcient Eye* alſo, *every moment* and leaſt *particle of time* upon it, and *every where*, in every Chamber and corner, every part of it; therefore he muſt needs know exactly all the *hearts deceitfulneſs*, and *deſperate wickedneſs*. As he made the whole frame of the Soul, and *all the faculties*, the *Springs* and *Wheels* of that exquiſite frame, ſo he knows all the *foulneſs* and *ſoil* of ſin which hath *fallen in*, and which it hath *gathered*; all its *motions irregular*, all its *ſtops and ſtands*, all its *commiſſions* and *omiſſions*, all its *defects of principles*, all its *corrupt principles*: Therefore knowing the both natural powers of the Soul, with all *ſuperadded corrupt principles* evilly inclining, *aims and intereſts* biaſſing and leading: he keeping alſo ſuch an Eye ever upon it; for of the things in the whole world, there's no one thing the Eye of God looks ſo upon as *ſpirits* and *hearts*: He muſt know the *deceitfulneſs of it*, by being the only *Maker*, and likewiſe the continual *Obſerver* of it; and therefore if he affirms it how *deceitful* the heart is, it muſt be ſo.

3. But beſides, there can be nothing in the heart to *alter and change* it, to *reſtore and raiſe* it from this bad ſtate, but he *knows* it; his Eye is ever upon the heart, he keeps alway an *awakened Eye*, that is ſtill watching it, narrowly viewing it; he is the heart continual *ſearcher* and *tryer*, *Pſal.* 7.9. *He tries the heart and the reins.*

4. He

4. He must also be *Judge* of the secrets of mens hearts, *Rom.* 2. 16. *God shall judge the secrets of mens hearts, &c.* therefore all deceitfulness of it, therefore he must know it, and it must be true, *Rom.* 2. 2. *The Judgment of God is according to truth*, and the Word of *truth* whereby he will judge.

5. Take in also the *recorded demonstrations* of it, such as God *discovered*, *foretold*, and after came to pass, setting a seal to this *infallible truth*.

Hazael 2 *King.* 8. 19. was by *Revelation* from God, told it by *Elisha*, and with much *seeming abhorrence* disclaim'd it, yet *instantly* is confuted, and had his mouth stopt. The Apostles were told of their forsaking Christ, and *Peter* of his *denying* of him, which he would not believe, *Mar.* 14. 50. yet within a very little time appeared: Scripture Records of the *hearts great deceitfulness* are left us to *conclude* and confirm us herein. But O how hard is it to see, *to believe against our selves!* Our own great frequencies of *Experiences*, the very instances out of *the Nurseries of our own hearts*; the evil Plants that put forth fresh continually of their fruits *deceitfulness*, prove it to our faces, if we make Observations of them as we ought to do. O there's not one day if we are watchful, but is full of *sad instances* from Morning to Night: At all times we may find our hearts ready to *commit cheats upon* our selves, and in soul concerns, as to our spiritual Estates, O what grand deceits are we too apt to have therein!

As particularly, in respect of God, how ready to think erroneously of him; as to his *omniscience*, *truth*, *holiness*, *righteousness*, *mercy*, *free Grace*, *power*, and *providence*, and such like? As the self condemned Drunkard, *Deut.* 29. 19. says, *I shall have peace*

though I adde drunkenneſs to thirſt: And he in the 50. *Pſalm v.* 21. *Thou ſaidſt I was like to thee*: ſo the beſt are out of predominant corruption, very ready to commit *great miſtakes* and *deceits*, in reſpect of their own ſins, *graces*, the things of God, and things of the world, there's no end of naming; excellent Treatiſes are written of this *hearts deceitfulneſs*.

2. Meditation ſhould proceed to the *unſpeakable ſadneſs* of this heart Temper, every one ſhould cry out with the holy Apoſtle, *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this deceitful heart*! out of the hands of this Deceiver ſo great and ſo near, gotten ſo far within me, and that will be a *curſed inmate*, ſo long as this Houſe of the Body ſtands, and will not out utterly whatſoever hard uſage it finds!

O how ſad is it to have ſuch a *ſelf-betraying* companion, ſo deeply rooted within me! To have in my own Boſom, ſuch a *continual Forge* and *Fountain*, acting and running in ſo *violent Tydes*, high Spring-Tydes, ever and anon, carrying me down *to that I muſt ſo ſadly bewail*, and ſmart under!

3. The *attendants* and *conſequences* of this *heart deceitfulneſs* ſhould *greatly* be pondered, as to be *ſo fooled by* my ſelf, by truſting my ſelf, *Prov.* 28. 26. *He that truſts his own heart is a Fool*: May I not truſt my own heart, without having ſuch a Character and Brand upon me? O then what a Fool have I been, and that Millions of Millions of times? O how great a Fool exceeding often, in ſuffering ſo *notorious Cheats* to be put upon me? ſuch a Luſt or Corruption to clap a Biaſs on my Heart, and *Fool lead me*? lead me ſo far, ſo deep into the *dirt*, ſo far from

from *home*, from *Heaven*, from *God*, from *peace*, *comfort*, *hope*, and *heart of returning*! How many and many ways have I been a *fool*? yea and ſtill am daily moſt *unwiſe*; he that is ſo *eaſily* and *ordinarily unwiſe*, muſt be a *fool to purpoſe*. Whoſoever ſhall be but *twice or thrice cheated by the ſame perſon*, and not beware, will be accounted no wiſe man; but for a *ſinner* to be not *twice*, or *thrice* cheated, *but thouſands of times* by the ſame *deceitful heart*; cheated with the ſaddeſt, ſaddeſt imaginable *deceits*, muſt be unwiſe indeed. O how ſad is it that we cannot *by all experiences* take heed of this *deceitful heart*!

I can take heed of every one *better than my ſelf*; it may be I ſcarce will truſt any body *in worldly affairs*, but *my ſelf* that is worſe than any without me, that I will *truſt*, and ſo be deceived: O let me often think what *truſting my own heart is*, and needs muſt come unto.

I had need think well of the *fooliſh Builder*, *Mat.* 7.26. *that built his houſe upon the ſand*, grounded his hopes of *ſalvation* on a falſe bottom; and of *the wiſe Builder*, *who built his houſe on a Rock*, by real building, by precious Faith on Chriſt. And let me likewiſe *meditate* often on the *ten Virgins*, the *fooliſh deceived* with a Lamp of *outward profeſſion* only, and *the wiſe* that with their *Lamps* provided Oyl, of Grace, a heart *right-renovation*.

4. *Meditate*, *firſt*, *on the heart-knower*. Againſt *heart deceitfulneſs*, let me as the ſure way *look up continually* to the only perfect heart-knower, to beg moſt earneſtly his help, to ſhew me my *hearts deceitfulneſs*.

Secondly, *on Chriſt my wiſdom*. Let me mind this well

well, *that Christ only* must be my *wisdom*, 1 Cor. 1. 31. my *teacher*, whom I must apply, and rest on peculiarly for his wisdom and teachings daily, to *extricate* and carry me out of the Labyrinths, and many secret windings of my so *deceitful spirit*.

Thirdly, on the Spirit my helper. And must consider the *mighty helper*, the *Holy Spirit*, to help me against my self-deceivings, *Rom.* 8. 26. *He helps our infirmities*, and he helps against this infirmity of being so ready to be cheated.

Christ by his Spirit, he can and will deliver me if I trust upon him, he hath given me his Word.

Fourthly, the Word. I must meditate on the Word, there are the *sure Rules* and *ways* revealed, to shew how *to undeceive my self*: The Word, *Heb.* 4. 12. *is a discerner of the thoughts, and intents of the heart*; if I make it my Exercise to meditate in the Word of Christ, he by his Spirit with the Word will teach and help me, if I obey it.

I have endeavoured a little, this being so important a concernment, to help our Meditation in it; and those that *believe and fear* their hearts deceivings most, will ever speed best; those *that trust* their hearts *most*, will smart most.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of divers other things for ſolemn and ſet Meditation.

6. SOlemn and ſerious Meditation, a very great and diligent conſideration, I ſhould often act in reference to that *arch Enemy* without, namely the Devil, who though he be an Enemy without, yet gains and maintains all he can, a *correſpondency* with corruption within me.

Satan I muſt conſider *as fallen from God*, and ſo from his primitive ſtation and happineſs, into damnation and Hell, *fallen out implacably* with God, and for his ſake with his *beſt Creature* on Earth, man. Out of his implacable hatred, his aim is to drown men in the ſame Perdition and Hell with himſelf, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *He ſeeks whom he may devour*, *Rev.* 2. 24. he hath his *deceits*, *depths*, *methods*, and *arts* of both tempting and troubling, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. And theſe acted with the *pureſt enmity*, *keeneſt malice*, *utmoſt vigilancy*, and *unwearied* diligence.

He hath *the higher ground* of us by far, as being a Spirit, and of the higheſt rank of Creatures, as to his Nature and Eſſence, and is thereby *moſt wiſe* and *ſtrong* and *agile*: He *is immortal*, never can dye, nor in *any ſort decay*, as we and other creatures decay in ſtrength, ſenſes, and exerciſing of our ſouls faculties, underſtanding, memory and others; as he is never dying, nor in the leaſt decaying, ſo *he hath been*, is and ever will be to the worlds end, *trying* and *tempting*.

tempting. *Trying* and *practising* upon the innumerable sorts of persons, of all Sexes, all Ages, (that are capable in the least degree to be tempted) of all ranks, conditions, relations, in all places whatsoever, through the vast inhabited earth. *Job* 1. 7.

He also *enlarges his experiences*, puts still *fresh* on his file; *improves* continually his arts of deceiving; and doth he not grow more bold, raging, and busie, as his time grows shorter? *Rev.* 12. 12.

Pondered well it should be, that *'tis not one single Devil* to tempt us, but there are *Legions*, very many of them; and they are all one huge Army of Devils, under one great Head, *The Devil and his Angels*, *Mat.* 25. 41. *Rev.* 12. 7. His Angels are his assistants, which constantly and exactly comply and co-operate with him. The Devils never are *divided*, do not *jar* and act against each other, but are all of one *interest* of destroying Souls, and accordingly do *harmoniously contend.*

Oft in Scripture mention is made of Satan and the Devil, as if he were a single one: But this may be to shew their unanimity and unity.

The Scripture hath sufficiently warned us, and related his attempts and prevailings; as *first upon Adam and Eve* in their state of innocency and perfection; yet he then (though they knew not only their own happiness, but all their posterities, though never so numerous, lay at the stake) he then by his Artifices, and subtlety prevailed.

After that, *upon the second man* that ever was, upon the *deceived Parents* first born *Cain*, therefore 1 *Joh.* 3. 12. *Cain* is said to be of the wicked one; and on sundry other wicked all along still the current of time.

Yea

Yea prevailed he often hath upon the *very beſt Saints* that ever the world had; *Job*, *David*, *Peter*, and others, *Job* 3. 1, *&c.* 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. *Mat.* 26. 3. he forbears none: Therefore it is very much to be conſidered, and how he is to be *watched* and *warred* with; and the *Armour of proof* is to be duly minded, and the putting of it on, *Epheſ.* 6. 13.

He that *hath conquered him*, the *Lord Jeſus*, and that hath *conquered him for his members*; this glorious conqueſt muſt be meditated upon, as the *ſtrongeſt Cordial* in the caſe; and way of taking it, the *Promiſe*, with the way of *acting by the Promiſe*, Praying and other Ordinances given for our help, this need be often *a great Meditation.*

7. That Enemy *the World ſhould have its due Meditation*: Its *allurements* on the one ſide, its *oppoſitions* on the other: I muſt meditate on the *diverſities of baits*, the latitudes of *Pleaſures*, heights of *Honour*, heaps of *Wealth*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. *Friends*, *Relations*, *Company*, *Converſe*, *Cares*, *Buſineſs*, and all my *Lets*, *Diverſions*, *Entanglements*, of all the evils; in *Troubles*, *Forcings*, *Frauds*, *Plottings*, and all ways of *enſnaring* and *ruining* me. Alſo the World (in ſo many reſpects being ſuited either to my natural inclination, or my cuſtomary readineſs for cloſing with it; or otherwiſe to my *fears* and *cowardiſe*, *ſoftneſs* and *fickleneſs*, *weakneſs* and *wearineſs* to withſtand or overcome it) Yet I muſt conſider how the Saints *have overcome the world*, by acting, as *Moſes* and others, their ſelf-denyal, *looking to the recompence of reward*, looking to him that is inviſible, and eſpecially to Jeſus, *the Author and finiſher of our Faith*; and by Faith and Patience

tience both enduring and gloriouſly overcoming.

8. Sometimes I may very fruitfully meditate on the *wants* and *weakneſs* of my *Grace* begun in ſome meaſure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. its often *ebbings* and *flowings*, its *ſtops* and *ſtands*: A little progreſs at the beſt my ſo carnal heart makes; alſo of the *extream need* I have of continual ſtirring up, and exerciſing *Faith*, *Love*, *Hope*, *Fear*, and *other Graces*, thereby to grow *ſtronger*, and put forth *vigorouſly* on all occaſions; minding alſo the *helps I have in Chriſts holy Ordinances*, encouragements in the precious *promiſes*, and ſupplies by the *bleſſed Spirits operations* out of the ſo great fulneſs of Chriſt.

9. Oft I ſhould apply my ſerioufneſs to that ſo concerning particular, the *continual* and *faſt* running out of the *golden ſands of my time*, and ſpecial ſeaſons for working out of my ſalvation. *The time is ſhort*, ſaith the Apoſtle 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. *Pſal.* 39. 5. *Behold thou haſt made my days as an handbreadth.* Seaſons paſt can never be recall'd, ſeaſons preſent cannot be ſtopt from running out: *Opportunity is the greateſt Talent, as the ſaying is, as that whereby we employ all other Talents.*

Therefore we are ſo often earneſtly call'd upon, for redeeming time, as *Eph.* 5. 16. *Redeeming the time.* *Eccl.* 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work in the Grave, &c.* Though time and ſeaſons, as the courſe of the Heavens may be made to ſtop, if the Sun as in *Joſhua*'s time, ſhould *miraculouſly ſtand ſtill*, *Joſ.* 10. 13. or as in *Hezekiah*'s time *go back*, *Iſa.* 38. 8. yet mens particular time then did not *go back*, or *ſtand ſtill*; ſo our particular time of life cannot

go

go back, or stand still, Job. 9. 25. and 14. 1, 2. and *ver.* 5.

Life *every moment* shortens, and is *melting down* into its appointed period.

Life is a thing of the *greatest contingency* and uncertainty, there is no *Ensurance Office* set up for it.

It passes swiftly without pause or stop, this the Scripture both minds us greatly of, and furnishes us with rare *precedents of the Saints serious and wise Meditations about it.*

O let me then look on them and *do likewise!* let me use and *improve* the patterns purposely there recorded, to help and quicken my forgetful dead spirit.

I next come to speak of the four last things, as they commonly are called, *Death, Judgment, Hell,* and *Heaven.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Meditation of Death.

THE *uncertainty of life* laſt mentioned, leads me to the ſubject next akin to it, that ſo *conſiderable* and *conſequential point* of *Mortality*, *Death*, and *Diſſolution*. O that here I could be *the higheſt Artiſt* to ſpeak moſt *fitly* and *movingly* to this ſubject *Death*, or at leaſt to do ſomething which might prove effectual to ſome ſuch proper and *proportionate way* of directing and quickning this ſo neceſſary and uſeful Meditation. This is the *great momentous* and moſt highly concerning thing, the end and winding up of life, and all affairs and matters relating to it, and that which *caſts me*, and determines my condition *for all Eternity* in woe or happineſs. Let me therefore endeavour the *beſt I can* at all times to improve my thinkings of it.

1. Let me firſt begin with the *meritorious cauſe of it*: That which *Heathens* knew not, *Nature* ſaw not, *Philoſophy* and *Learning* could not find out, nor reach; only holy Scripture tells me, and ſhews it to be that moſt *black inlet* ſin, *Rom.* 5.12. *Death entred into the world by ſin*, and *v.* 17. *By one mans offence death reigned*; not only entred, but reigned, hath maſtered, and will maſter all ſinners. *Sin, that greateſt evil* in the world, *ſin* the only contrariety to the living God that gave life to man at firſt, and ever ſince; *ſin*, that only *injury* to the bleſſed God, bred and brought death, the greateſt miſery to man here; *ſin*,

ſin that provoked God to paſs the ſentence; *ſin* occaſioning the vindictive cauſe, the *Juſtice of God*, to let in death, death with the conſequences of it, that would follow without a Mediator that *Adam* knew not of: Death ſo conſidered, is the way of the very *deepeſt revenge* a God can take.

But then this black part of it, *bodily death*, without that blacker Train of *Hell* and *Eternity* in it, is that which muſt challenge a very great proportion of *ponderings*.

2. Let me look at, not only the riſe of it, and the bare wrath occaſioning the inflicting it, but that ſo *fixt* and *irreverſible ſentence*, that like the Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians* cannot be broken, *Heb.* 9. 27. *It's appointed for all*; the *univerſality of ſin* hath given death an *univerſal ſting*; and the Statute of Heaven hath *impowered* Death's Extenſiveneſs over all, and ſet a *ſeal of irrevocableneſs* to it as to all men. Therefore it is appointed, I muſt think, *particularly* for me; whatever I am, or do, or can in utmoſt poſſibility do. I muſt not *once think* of making an eſcape from it.

Yea let me conſider, as I muſt die, ſo the *very Year*, *Moneth*, *Day*, *Hour*, and *Moment* is *immutably fixt*, and can never be altered, *Job.* 14. 5. the *place* alſo where, the *means* whereby, the *manner how*, all *circumſtances* about it are unchangeably determined.

3. But how material is that particular of the *uncertainty* of the time and manner to me? that's a *reſervation* and *ſecret* kept in the Lord's *own breaſt*, not poſſibly to be exactly known before, without it be revealed, as Chriſt of the Great Day of Judgment ſaith, *Mat.* 24. 36. *Of that day and hour knoweth no*

man. And Verſe 42. *Ye know not what hour your Lord will come.* And 44. *In ſuch an hour you think not your Lord comes*; ſo the two latter may be applyed to this of death, when he calls *for an accompt* of our Stewardſhips and Talents, and paſſes *particular* and *perſonal Judgment.*

3. Let me paſs next, to the Meditation, ſerious pondering of *the nature* of it, and that great dreadfulneſs of that *moſt terrible of terribles, that King of terrours, Job.* 18. 14. Here that I may *duly* look on it, let me *look up* for a God to *teach* me, as to number my days, *Pſ.* 90. ſo to be *wiſe* to conſider my latter end, to do that *hard* work, *overcome* that difficulty of *looking Death-ward.* Nature *abhors* the thinking of it, Corruption all it can *oppoſes* it; but *Grace* muſt bring and fix earneſtly and often the Eye upon it, *familiarize* death to me, let me then *Eye my diſſolution*, the parting of the two *neareſt*, *deareſt* friends, the Soul's taking its ſad farewel of its former dwelling; its going, *going in an inſtant* out of the Body, and then *that which Death* doth as an *Enemy* to all former Life concerns; and as an *entrance* upon an Eternal Condition.

1. As *an Enemy to all enjoyments* how ſweet ſoever: Pleaſures all now quenched, Honours now all daſht, Riches and Eſtate now all loſt, Power now utterly ceaſt.

2. An Enemy to *all Relations*, Friends, Acquaintance; now muſt I ſhake hands with all neareſt and deareſt, the ſweeteſt and moſt helpful Relations.

3. An *Enemy to all Imployments*, neceſſary or pleaſurable, no Work, no Buſineſs, no Invention after it.

4. An *Enemy to all Opportunities and Means* of Grace,

Grace, never to *read* the *Bible* more, *never* to *hear* one *Sermon* more, *never* to receive the *Lords Supper* more, *never* to make one *Prayer*, the ſhorteſt of one of the feweſt words more; and then alſo when thou art *juſt launching* into the *length* of *vaſt Eternity*: But now muſt be *Prayerleſs* and totally *helpleſs*, yea now thy Souls condition becomes *becalmed*, and thou canſt not obtain one *gale of the Holy Spirit* to blow upon thee, and help move thee in any meaſure.

5. Its an *Enemy quickly* to the curious frame and ſo exquiſite building of thy body, with all its parts and members, made with ſuch *adaptations* and ſuitableneſs whatever, with all the *Tempers*, *Qualities*, *Offices*, *Abilities*, and *Actings* of it: An *Enemy* likewiſe to all the *ſenſes*; *ſeeing*, *hearing*, the *two diſciplinary*, with *feeling*, *taſting*, *ſmelling*, the ſo likewiſe *neceſſary*.

6. It is an *Enemy* and *Deſtroyer* of all *comlineſs*, and *beauty*, *form* and *ſhape*: And *all theſe former* by being the *Enemy* and *Deſtroyer* of that thy ſo *ſweet* and *precious life*; by making that *Jewel drop* out of the Cabinet of the Body: or rather *driving* forth thy *immortal* and *invaluable* ſoul, bringing with it a *Writ of forcible entrance*, coming with an *Execution*, to turn out that *old inhabitant* of the body, *ſecuring it from regaining poſſeſſion*, *making it ſtand empty*, and *thence expoſing the body to rot*, *ruine*, *turn to duſt*, and expoſe it to *Oblivion*, as if it had never been.

But then *upon thy Souls* thus leaving thy Body, *immediately* and *inſtantly* it is caſt upon a ſtate of Eternity; of Miſery if thou wert not in Chriſt, or *felicity* if found and dying in him.

When Life ends, Eternity begins: O this all amazing *Eternity*; this *ſo vaſt* and *inconceivable Eternity*, no *way* to be expreſt or ſet forth, *no way* to be underſtood or known, a *Glaſs* that is ever running, a *Chain that is ever lengthening*: who can number the *Sands* of this *Glaſs*, who can reckon the *links* of this *Chain* of *Eternity*, without *ſtop* or period, *bound* or *end*? *O let me be ever muſing of this Ever!* have it ſo full *in my Eye*, while I have time, this *moment of time here*, that it may wind up and leave me in *poſſeſſion of moſt happy Eternity*.

But *to affect my ſpirit aright*, and be wiſe in the due managing of this *Meditation of dreadful Death*, let me *look to* and ponder the Scripture *Commands*, for remembring and conſidering my latter end, *and the Arguments* ſtrongly inducing to it. How frequently and earneſtly is it urged upon all? O let me *lay the weight* and ſtreſs of them cloſe to my heart, not ſuffering it to put by the *thoughts of death*, how awk and averſe ſoever my *carnal ſpirit* is towards it!

Let me therefore not only *muſe on the ſentence*, the *peremptory* and *irrevocable ſentence* paſſed upon all in general, and ſo upon my ſelf in particular, but on it as *ready to be executed this hour*, yea *this moment*, for ought I, or any in the world can tell: Ah let me ſay to my ſelf, *the Warrant* for my death at this *very inſtant* may be ſealing, and *immediately* in a moment put in Execution. Ah therefore ſhould I not *ſtill daily repreſent* and *realize* to my heart, my own particular *coming Death*! repreſent it by thoſe *frequent Examples* the *hand of Death brings*, and *ſets full before my face*, to *force my Obſervation*!

The

The deaths of both *ſtrangers* to me, and *familiars* with me, of *near Neighbours*, *dear Friends*, *ſweeteſt Relations*; bereaving me, it may be, of the *Father* that begat me, the *Mother* that bare me, the *Children* of my bowels, the *Wife* of my boſom, or the *Husband* that was my guide and ſtay; or ſome *other very comfortable Relation*, and ſo the comfort of any ſuch Relation ceaſes.

All Relations are *broken, by this Bond-breaker, this Tie-diſſolver, Death.*

When I ſee theſe thus called away, and muſt be my *Relations no more*, ſhould not I hear my *ſelf call'd upon* to come away (ſhortly it may be) after them?

O but with theſe near warnings without me, let me *take thoſe nearer warnings upon* me, and *within* me, *inevitably* ſtill ſeizing me. Let me take thoſe many *ſucceſſive ſummons* given for my own perſonal change.

Ah how many are *thoſe joggings* the hand of Death daily gives me, for my awakening into that ſerious pondering, of *that death I either ſeldom, or ſlightly mind!*

How many *ſtrokes* may I obſerve Death daily gives at the *Root of the Tree*, making, as it were, the *Chips flye in my face*; making me *ſmart* by Pains, Aches, Weakneſs, Crazineſs, Failings, and Fallings of the ſpirits and ſtrength, and increaſe of Infirmities; by all *declaring he is making at me*: And how many *pieces of my houſe of Clay* may I ſee *crumbling* and *mouldring* away, now one and then another: After the morning of my Age, my Sun ſoon gets up higher, *ſoon it is noon, afternoon, and night* with me.

How ſoon is the Sun at the *height* with any in the

bright and warm beams of *bodily beauty* and *ſtrength*? but *how impoſſible* is it for to ſay effectually to it, *Sun ſtand thou ſtill and go not down, for the leaſt moment*? How ſoon appear, one way or other, the *tendencies* to death in and upon us?

Decay in Beauty and Comlineſs. Sometimes, yea ordinarily, when we are in *the Flower*, preſently the Beauty and Comlineſs begins to blaſt: The *beſt* and *faireſt Face*, as to the pure White and Red, ſoon either becomes *paler*, or *higher coloured*, after grows *darker* and *deader*, ſtill *one* way or *other* worſe. As to the *feature* and curious ſhape of Face and whole Body, *ſoon* that likewiſe changes, either by *a contraction* in *leanneſs* and *thinneſs*, or by *an extenſion* in *corpulency* and *groſsneſs*: Both the curious and rare *Colours* and *Features* change, warning us of tendency to the *laſt great coming change*. Or ſometimes an *intimation* is given by the *Grinders of our food*, whereby we live, by the *decayings* ſtill of the Teeth; the Teeth which are abſolutely the *hardeſt* and *ſtrongeſt* things about us, theſe ſo ſoon decaying, as it is in moſt, plainly it *demonſtrates* that the *ſofter* and *weaker* things in and about us, and ſo the *whole frame*, will go at laſt. By this, the ſoon decaying of the *hardeſt pieces*, Death ſeems to ſet his *black mark* on us, we have his *mark in the mouth*; and by their decayings and rottings we *touch*, as it were, theſe his warnings continually with *our Tongues*, thence to mind us of what change is coming.

For when the *Teeth fail* (the Grinders and Meat Preparers, made to fit meat for the ſtomach) this cauſes the ſtomach to *act leſs perfectly*; and on *its failing* in degree, all the *dependencies* muſt needs fail in their Offices.

But

But if theſe Deaths Marks begin not ſo in ſome, yet how do we find *generally* ſome other marks of decay ſet upon us?

If Death come *not early*, yet how ſoon upon moſt doth he *ſet his mark*? *moſt obſervably* on the very *top* of our *Houſes of Clay*, bringing forth gray Hairs on the *higheſt part*, the Head, and turning them *whiter* every day; *Making the Almond Tree to flouriſh*, as *Solomon* elegantly in *Eccl.* 12. And in how many Elegancies doth there the Wiſe man diſcover and *repreſent rarely* the decays of the Body in old age? all as *demonſtrations* of Deaths being continually buſie about us, both to prepare and reduce us to his poſſeſſion.

What *varieties* of warnings are given us in the *impairings* of this or that Member, or of ſeveral parts of the Body; by ſometimes *Sores*, *Impoſthumes*, *Fiſtulas*, *Gangrens*, and parts corrupting, ſhewing a coming diſſolution: How many mortal Diſeaſes (beſides others ſhaking the Houſes of our frail Bodies) I ſay incurable Diſeaſes, whereby we are told that Death hath us now faſt in his hand?

If not ſo, yet what warnings otherwiſe are given, in the *ſenſes beginning to fail*? as our Sight growing dimmer, Hearing duller, and in the reſt. And as in the parts more common, ſo in the *noble* and *principal* parts, in the *Liver*, *Heart*, *Head*, and others; theſe not performing ſo perfectly their Offices, whence the ſpirits, ſtrength, and motion are *impaired*; the *Fleſh* waſtes, the *Skin* wrinkles, *Memory* and *Underſtanding* likewiſe decay, and appearances of death come all the Body over; what are all the forementioned and concurrent decays, but a being *Death-ſmitten*? a coming out full of the *Tokens* of

Death? What are all these successions of *decays*, but so many *added links* of that *great Chain* Death holds in his hand, and *draws* us to him by? All Messengers that have the sound of their *Masters feet*, Death behind them.

O how exceeding gracious is God in his *Multiplications* and *Connexions* of warnings, who might smite every Sinner, without any notice of death given!

Therefore as a piece of *highest wisdom*, let me strive to represent the possible *suddenness* of Deaths sad coming upon me; and this by all the *ways* and *inducements* I can apply. The *Examples*, such *as are in Scripture*, of *Abels* death, *Lot*'s Wife, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *Uzzah*, *Amnon*, *Abner*, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Herod*, and others: And in *History* and *Experience*, of so many and so various ways suddenly snatcht away.

Not a Year, or some small portion of time, but it furnishes with *fresh Examples*: What hath befallen others, may befall me, I have no security against sudden death; but whersoever, and in whatever time *death* may seize me.

If I Travel, a *Thief* may kill me, my *Horse* may throw and kill me, the *Coach* or *Carriage* I pass in may ruine me; on the *Water*, I may there be drowned; on the Land, and when I am passing in the Streets, some *casualty* may dispatch me; at *home*, by some *mischance* or *sudden distemper*, something at the Table, Fire, Bed, or other place, within or without doors; some Imposthume, Palsey, Apoplexy kills, or some venomous inward vapour may strike me to the heart.

Multitudes of Experiences we continually have:

If

If not ſuddenly Death ſeizes, but is a ſtroke with warning, either ſhorter or longer, yet it comes at laſt, in the way, and at a time, or hour I juſt know not.

My beſt way therefore is to, *frequently* in my thoughts, put my ſelf into the condition of a *preſent dying:* How it muſt be with me, let me look on my ſelf how *certainly*, without *flattery*, I am prepared *to dye*! If I have a Chriſt in my *boſom*, the *Love of God* aſſured, and can dye in the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. dye in Faith, and look Death in the face boldly, reſign up my ſoul freely into *Chriſts hands*; theſe make for this *Agony* the *higheſt Cordial*; theſe furniſh me with *Armour* of proof againſt this Enemy.

But let me then look on my ſelf as having *no means* farther to preſerve me, all *Phyſick*, *Art*, and *Experiences* withdrawing their uſual help, *Friends* ſtanding about me, pitying, lamenting me, but not able to evidence more than their kind wiſhes, and I my ſelf perceiving *Deaths ſummons* ſent me, as to King *Hezekiah*, but without expecting any Meſſenger after to be ſent with better News: Prayers now and all ſuch means alſo *reverſed*, and proving labours loſt, I now feeling my decays and haſtening away; my diſquiets and *pains* encreaſing, *ſtrength* failing, *ſpirits* ſinking, *heat* turned into chillneſs; *Cramps*, contractions of Nerves and limbs following, *breath* ſhortening, *ſpeech* faultring, *heart* pangs and agonies now multiplying, the whole frame of the body *ſhaking*, the Hands *ſnatching*, *Eye-ſtrings*, as they ſay, *breaking*; and after many deep heavy ſighings and groanings, the Soul *comes forth* with gaſpings, and ſitting upon my *quivering* lips,

lips, upon the *laſt gaſp* takes its nimble *flight*, leaves its old habitation to rottenneſs and corruption, and launches forth into an everlaſting new condition.

Lord teach me *ſo to number my days*, ſee how frail I am, *Pſal.* 90. 12. *Pſal.* 39. 1. let me ſo often realize this dying to my ſelf, in moſt ſerious Meditation, put my ſelf into this condition of Deaths coming, and acting his part, his utmoſt on me, that I may both *familiarize* and *facilitate* this ſo dreadful and difficult work, that I may be greatly deſirous to be *diſſolved*, and be thereby with Chriſt, which is beſt of all; O that I may perform this laſt work beſt! which that I may, and make that great Enemy my great Friend, my Loſſes *greateſt Gain*, let me ſtill mind Chriſt's healing this *bitter water*, making it ſweet, making this *Deaths-day* better than the *Births-day*; let my thoughts be on the Sting's pulling out, that it cannot hurt, if I am Chriſt's.

Death is ours if we are Chriſt's, and for our moſt high advantages, as being the great *outlet* of all evil and miſery, I now ſhall ſin no more, be tempted and enſnared no more, the World ſhall now be corruptions bait, and Satans Hook no more, Satan ſhall never *throw at me* any fiery dart more, God will never *deſert me*, hide his face from me more.

All Miſeries, Croſſes, Loſſes, Poverty, Shame, Pain, Sickneſs, Weakneſs, Wearineſs, Faintneſs, Hunger, Thirſt, Cold, Nakedneſs, Labour, Toil, Cares, Fears, Sorrows, and Diſquiets, and whatſoever of this lifes Evils can be named, is at an Eternal end.

And Death becomes the great *inlet* of all good, to flow in moſt abundantly; a paſſage to Heaven,

to

to be poſſeſt of a Crown of Glory, to enjoy the innumerable company of Saints and Angels, to be with Chriſt, and ſeeing God face to face, and fulneſs of felicity for evermore.

CHAP. XIX.

Of Judgment after death.

ON the *ſad parting* of thoſe two deareſt friends, Soul and Body comes inſtantly the *doom* and *ſentence*, *Heb.* 9. 27. the *particular* Judgment of the perſon, to paſs and be put in execution, to an Eternal Eſtate, either of Happineſs or Miſery, *immediately* as to the immortal Soul, and afterward at the General Reſurrection of Body and Soul in Conjunction.

This therefore *little foregoing Day of Judgment*, upon which, by the Bodies *mortality* and neceſſity of dying, and the Souls *immortality* and neceſſity of not dying, every perſon comes to be ſtated in eternal *miſery* or *happineſs* unavoidably, is a point of moſt high conſequence, to be well conſidered, deeply weighed, often dwelt upon in our *moſt prudent* improvements of retiredneſs.

A very great frequency, and repetition of our beſt thoughts and ſerious ponderings, muſt be the Tribute of this concern, this vertical point, this

Judg-

Judgment which caſts the *ſcales*, and makes full *weight* for *miſery* or *felicity* for ever; *For as the tree falls, ſo it lies*, as Death leaves, Judgment, this particular Judgment, finds us, dooms us *irreverſibly*; there is no bringing a *Writ of Errour*, no *Appeal* to be made, no *pardon* now the Judge will give, no *petition* he will receive, no ſtay of proceedings can in the leaſt be granted, or lookt for on any ground.

This to every particulat perſon *in ſome reſpect* is his great day of Judgment, this *diſpoſes* and *diſpatches*, this *ſecures* and *keeps* me for the great general Aſſize and Judgment; this is the Foundation that will be the Superſtructure, this is ſecret, that is ſolemn, this for a *private execution*, that for one in *open view* of all.

But this Judgment particular ſtrikes the firſt ſtroke of utter undoing, or lends the firſt hand of help to an eternal ſaving, and without which the great Judgment doth not proceed.

Ah then well may I afford this Judgment a great frequency, largeneſs, & ſeriouſneſs of thoughts, which *launches* the Ship of my Soul into the Ocean of Eternity, which lets my Soul, either preſently to ſink into the Bottomleſs Pit, purpoſely ſends it thither, caſts it into the Lake of Everlaſting Fire, or ſends it into *Abrahams* boſom, into the harbour of eternal happineſs, and enters this Jewel into the Cabinet of Heaven. Ah how unſpeakably conſiderable is this particular Judgment! The very moment of my death, that is uncertain, and the very next moment after death comes *certain Judgment*, *irreſiſtably*, and *irrecoverably*, and determines our ſtate of Eternity.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Of the general Judgment Day.

BUT then particular Judgment foregoing, this is but the foundation and introduction of the following.

The private and partial *execution* on the Soul *ſeparate* from the Body, ſhall have a *publick* and moſt *ſolemn* both *manifeſtation* and *conſummation* with it.

1. This day, among *other ends*, is reſerved for the ſo *great* and *glorious manifeſtation* of the *infinite holineſs* and *righteouſneſs*, *grace* and *mercy*, *wrath* and *ſeverity*, and other *Attributes* of God; never in this *world* having their ſo full *diſcovery*, as now by the *intendment* and *moſt wiſe contrivance* of a God they ſhall have, before *Angels* and *Saints*, *Devils* and *wicked men*.

The Judgment-day, *Rom.* 2. 5. is called *the day of the Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*; of that righteouſneſs, that ſo *great* and *glorious Attribute* ſo little *underſtood*, leſs *conſidered*, ſo much queſtioned and cavil'd at, the *higheſt declaration* and *fulleſt Revelation* that ever was, ſhall be then *made* and *ſeen* by all.

So the *reſt* of Gods *Attributes* ſhall obtain their *meridian height*, and ſhine forth in their moſt perfect reſplendencies.

Therefore it needs muſt be a very great day when it is ſo intended, purpoſely to be *the greateſt day* that *ever was* or *can* be.

2. It

2. It is also *purposely constituted* for the highest glory of *Jesus Christ*, that he may both be admired of *Saints* and *Angels*, and magnified in the sight of all wicked men and Devils.

Therefore he now is to appear in the *highest glory*, *splendour*, and *power*: And he being made now the visible *Judge*, this must be most glorious, in that it is the *consummating work* of his *Mediatory Kingdom*, preceding immediately his *delivering* up his *Kingdom* to *God the Father*, as the Apostle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. For the *method* and most fruitful way of this so very necessary Meditation, I conceive it may be,

1. To begin with those Scriptures that most *clearly* and *distinctly* present us with the *infallible certainty* of this grand point.

2. To then gather up the *Remarkable particulars* of it in Scripture, as to the Nature, Manner, and the things that both accompany and follow it.

3. How to manage it, to our being best moved and stirred up by it.

1. For the *infallible certainty* of this *Judgment day*, let me look out those Scriptures in the Old and New Testament, that speak perspicuously of it, and then labour by Meditation and Prayer to *sink deep* into my heart, to lay them so strongly to infuse, as to leave a *deep* abiding *tincture* upon it.

To be put into a full possession and assurance of Faith, in this so high *soul-concernment*.

In *Jude* 14. *Enoch* the seventh from *Adam*, that so walked with God, and that was first translated, prophesied of the Lords coming to Judgment.

Job, who is supposed by the Learned to have lived when the *Israelites* were in *Egypt*, and before

Moses

Moſes time, in his 19. *Chapter*, 25, 26, 27. *verſes*, hath a moſt clear and full aſſertion of his Redeemers being the laſt day on the Earth, and ſeeing him then, *&c.*

Solomon, *Eccl.* 12. 16. *God ſhall bring every thing to Judgment*, every ſecret thing, good or evil: *Dan.* 12. 2. *They that ſleep in the duſt ſhall ariſe, ſome to ſhame, others to life.*

In the New Teſtament, out of Chriſts the *Judges own mouth*, *Math* 25. 31. to the end. This Doctrine is moſt fully, with the particulars and manner of it, deſcribed, and in the other Goſpels often.

So the Apoſtle of the Gentiles, *Acts* 17. 19. At *Athens*, the great *Univerſity of the World*, he tells them God had appointed a day to Judge the World in *righteouſneſs*, and *by the man Jeſus*, *&c.* *Rom.* 2. 16. In that day that *God* ſhall Judge the ſecrets of mens hearts.

So we muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, *&c.* 2 *Cor.* 5. 10.

2 *Theſ.* 1. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Chriſt ſhall come in flaming fire, to render vengeance to all that know not God, and obey not the Goſpel.*

And *Revel.* 20. 12, 13. to the end, *I ſaw the dead ſtand before God, and judged according to their works*, *&c.*

The *varieties* of places in Scripture, are like many Candles lighted in one place, like multitudes of Lights in the Heavens, all to give light to us below, that we might have cleareſt diſcoveries, firmeſt Faith, ſtrongeſt inſtigations to yield full compliance and obedience, with greateſt readineſs, pleaſure and ſweetneſs.

O I muſt anſwer for having the Scriptures, the *varie-*

varieties, perſpicuities, convincing Reaſons, and *perſwading endeavours* of the Spirit of God towards me *in them* and *by them.*

The more in the Scripture is done for me, the more will be required of me: This for the firſt.

2. The particulars *remarkable* to be gathered together, of this day, as the *nature, manner, &c.*

1. I muſt meditate of the *Perſon,* the ſo *great* and *glorious Perſon* that ſhall be Judge, which is God himſelf, as the Scripture often tells us; as *Eccl.* 12. 16. *Rom.* 2. 16. as was mentioned before, *God ſhall judge, &c.* Though this be greatly conſiderable, under which our Faith muſt be concluded; and this alone well pondered may greatly awaken, awe, and provoke us to all fulneſs of regard and care: yet the Word tells us farther, it is God, *by Jeſus Chriſt,* ſo in *Acts* 17. 19. *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the World, by that man he hath appointed. Hath committed all judgment to the Son.*

It is not committed to the holieſt man that ever lived, nor to any mighty Angel, it is too *high* an Honour, too great a Work, for any created Nature, only fit for him that is *God and man.* For, by being God, there's both an Omniſcient, and Omnipotent, an infinitely Holy, Righteous, Good, and Merciful Judge; And by being Man, there's to all mens eyes a *viſible Judge,* that the Scriptures may be fulfilled. And this for the *Saints* ſurpaſſing joy, but the *wickeds* greater daunting and terrour, let in by the *eyes* both of the one and other: All muſt be judged by a Judge *their eyes ſhall behold.*

2. For the *time* of his coming, *Mat.* 24. 42. it cannot, will not be known: *At what hour your Lord will come, you know not.*

3. For

3. For the *ſuddenneſs* and *ſecreſie* of his coming, 1 *Pet.* 3. 10. *The Lord will come as a Thief in the night. Math.* 24. 44. *At an hour you think not your Lord comes.*

4. For the place whence he ſets out and comes, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 16. *The Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven.*

5. It will be in power and great glory, ſuch as never was, and never the like again ſhall be; never did the Sun of Righteouſneſs aſcend to and ſhine in ſuch a Meridian, ſuch a tranſcendent height of glory, *Tit.* 2. 3. *Looking for the glorious appearing.*

6. For the company and retinue, it's all the whole Court of Heaven, come to wait on their King of Glory. All the *glorified Saints* and *Angels* leave Heaven empty, to make up his Train, thouſand of thouſands giving their attendance, *Jude* 8. *With thouſands of his Saints.* 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7. *Comes with his mighty Angels. Math.* 25. 31. *Cometh, and all his holy Angels with him.* O what an unſpeakably glorious attendance this is!

7. For the dreadfulneſs of his coming, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7. *Chriſt is revealed coming in flaming fire.* 2 *Pet.* 3, 10. *The Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, the Elements melt with fervent heat, the Earth with the works in it burnt up.*

8. As a preparative to the Judgment, *Chriſt deſcends from Heaven,* 1. *with a ſhout* (never was there ſuch a ſhout made, in all the time the world ſtood) 2. *with the voice of the Arch-Angel,* and the Trump of God; the Voice and Trump at *Mount Sinai,* where ſix hundred thouſand might hear, that was a glorious and moſt dreadful voice and ſound, but no-

thing like this. Never ſuch a voice, that which will make the whole world ring, and the *dead* riſe out of their Graves, and with the ſame bodies, the ſame numerical bodies, that lived here.

3. Thoſe that are alive, *ſhall be changed in a moment, in the twinckling of an Eye, on the ſound of the Trump*, 1 Cor. 15.

4. *The dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt, be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16, 17. O bleſſed and moſt joyful meeting of the Saints that were on Earth, now raiſed, changed, and caught up to meet and ſee the Lord Jeſus their Saviour, and now the glorious Judge, coming to conſummate their happineſs in ſoul and body together, to die no more, and to *meet with all the Saints and Angels* come from Heaven, *and to be for ever with the Lord*, never to be from him again.

5. But others that were wicked and now raiſed, with the other *black Troop* that were in Hell, and now have their Souls united to their bodies: All ſhall be brought before Chriſt the Judge (according to the opinion of ſome) ſitting on a *high Throne* in the Air, the Saints and Angels all attending about him.

9. For the *manner* of theſe proceedings, alluding to the manner of mens Judicatures, as *Revelations, Chapter* 20.

1. *All perſons ſmall and great are brought, and ſtand before God*, that is Chriſt, God and man.

2. *The Books are opened*, the Book of Gods Omniſcience, and the Books of mens hearts and conſciences, not in an imperfect ſtate of ignorance and forgetfulneſs, but fully prepared for their work of

of anſwering at the Tribunal and Bar of Chriſt.

3. It is a judging men, *according to their works, for that hath been done in the body, good or evil, Eccl.* 12. 16. And a judging every *ſecret thing of mens hearts, Rom.* 2. 16.

Some conceive, that ſeeing there will be the *Revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom.* 2. therefore it will have a long time, to judge the cauſe of every perſon, in all particulars, that ſo the righteouſneſs of the judgment and ſentence of Chriſt, with the Execution of it, may fully appear, and none to have any leaſt objection againſt it. But *others think*, there will not be ſo particular a diſcovery, and tryal of all things, *relating to the Saints*, but a more general one.

However Chriſtians *muſt be diligent to be found of Chriſt, without ſpot and blameleſs*, as 2 *Pet.* 3. 14.

10. When the caſes of all have been tryed and made to appear, the *Sheep* having been *ſeparate* from the *Goats*, and ſet at Chriſts *right hand*, the *Goats* on the *left*; the ſentence then paſſes, that moſt comfortable ſentence for the Sheep, the Righteous (now ſo judged by the heart-knowing and moſt juſt Judge) *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.* And that terrible ſentence on the Goats, now openly convicted, *Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* To which the Saints and Angels all give their full approbation, as alſo to the doom upon the Devils.

11. Upon which the moſt righteous execution follows, of both the ſentences; for the righteous, and againſt the wicked ones.

To make all this obtain *a more efficacious impreſſion* daily on my ſpirit, let me ſtrive to repreſent this Day as *now come*, that I hear the Trump ſound, ſee the dead riſe, the living all changed in a moment; looking up I ſee Chriſt coming in the Clouds, with great glory, Angels and Saints all attending him, Chriſt placed on the Throne of Judgment; all perſons convented before him, and my *ſelf* among the reſt; my caſe tryed, my works, words, thoughts, and all my ſecrets judged, and my ſtate for all Eternity determined, and now when the World is all on Fire, the wicked ſent into that everlaſting deſtruction, the righteous going with Chriſt into Heaven and everlaſting happineſs; what my own particular *condition* is like to be.

If I can come before Chriſt, the all-knowing Judge, with confidence and exceeding joy, ſhall be abſolved, and hear that joyful ſentence, *Come thou bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for thee.*

CHAP. XXI.

Of Meditation of Hell, and Death Eternal therein.

THE very *naming of Death* is dreadful, Death Eternal is much more dreadful, but a being in Hell, the worſt place poſſible, is moſt dreadful of all.

Hell, though in the meer mentioning it makes ſuch a *jarr* upon the ſpirit of any; though the *leaſt* touching on it, by a but *glancing* thought, the leaſt touch be like the *needles* ſharp point to the *Apple* of the Eye, ſo acute a pain and ſmart; yet muſt the Eye of the ſoul, by Meditation, not only touch it, but take it cloſe to it, but dwell upon it.

Death natural, in the but very thought, hath a very *high attending regret*, we cannot endure to look *deathward*, but O how greatly unwilling to look in the leaſt this ſad way, *deſtruction-ward*, *Hell-ward*, toward death Eternal!

The firſt is *taſting Gall*, but the ſecond is a *drinking Poyſon*: The one hath a deep attending *reluctancy*, the other a *double died antipathy*. It's the *harſheſt* task for a ſinner, it's a hard for a *Saint*, to fix willingly, and dwell in Meditation, on ſo ſad and dreadful a ſubject as Hell is: yet is it that, which muſt be done, and by a holy wiſe ſpirit, may be both confidently and advantageouſly done. *The beſt Chriſtian on earth will loſe nothing by ſometimes looking into Hell, and fixing the thoughts there.* No

man ever yet *fled* from Hell, but firſt fixt his thoughts in ſome proportion on it: No man will *flye faſt enough* from this Pit of perdition, this Lake of Fire, if he do not oft look towards it, and *keep* his Eye upon it.

Hell and Death Eternal are ſet down in Scripture, for both evil and good mens *flying*; but this cannot be compaſt without frequencies of earneſt ponderings and meditatings.

For a right proceeding in this Meditation,

1. Let me *firſt look* to that which is my infallible rule, the teſtimony of that God, who founded Hell and laid the corner ſtone of it; who firſt threatned and prepared this Priſon, this Pit of deſtruction; who knows all the large dimenſions of it, all things in and about it, and cannot, nor will not, in the leaſt deceive us in it.

He hath given us his Word, to tell us, and that under his *own hand*, in great numbers and varieties of paſſages, that we cannot *rationally* conceive, he would ſo do, mention and give it *ſo many times* under his own hand, were there *no ſuch thing*, no local Hell, and ſecond Death Eternal.

My way therefore, as a *good* Chriſtian, is to look up, gather Scripture paſſages; paſſage after paſſage, all over the Book of God, as I find this aſſerted in them. O ſhall my lives time ravel out, without any redeeming it, as to this particular, of giving due, down weight of thoughts, frequent ſerious thoughts, as opportunity can be had, of Death Eternal in Hell?

I muſt not only ſay, there is a Hell: I muſt not only give it for granted, as moſt perſons do, but I muſt be concluded under the Scripture Authority;

See

See it and ſay it, upon due perſwaſion, upon clear *demonſtration*, demonſtration on *concluſive* argumentation, Arguments choſen as ſo many *Arrows* taken out of Chriſts *Quiver* the Scriptures, *levell'd* right, flying round up to the mark, and *hitting full* my unbelieving and *recoiling* averſe ſpirit, making it *fall* down under this weighty truth, *reducing* it through Chriſts help, to a firm and *operative belief*, yea ſo to aſſent to, and ponder this ſo high concern, as to work off all my uſual *wonted eaſineſs* and *ſlightneſs* of thinkings on this particular: And to arrive at a contrary *habitual ſerioufneſs*, and earneſtneſs of mindings, *frequent* thinkings; yea let my ſpirit not reſt, till I am reduced to, and improve, under the powerful and prevailing provocations of it, to whatever ſo great a thing calls for from me.

That I may daily more anſwer the *intendments* of a God, in relating this Hell, ſo plainly and plentifully in his Word, for my due *notice* of it.

My way then muſt be, a *courſe of ſerious* pondering the Scriptures; paſſage after paſſage, wherein the ſecond Death and Hell is ſet forth, in the ſeveral Books.

As in *Iſa.* 30. 1. *Tophet is prepared of old, even for the King, he hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a ſtream of Brimſtone doth kindle it.* An elegant deſcription in an alluſion: So thoſe many *clear paſſages* of Chriſts own mouth ſet down ſo plainly, as words can utter.

Math. 5. 22. and 29, 30. In that very firſt Sermon of Chriſts on the Mount, there he mentions *Hell-fire*, and *caſting into Hell*, three ſeveral times. *Mat.* 11. 23. *Brought down to Hell.*

Luke 16. 23. *The Rich man* is ſaid *to be in Hell Pet.*----*It's called a Priſon*, Priſons being the worſt of places, made for ſecuring and puniſhing. *Rev.* 20. 1. A bottomleſs Pit. *Luke* 16. 23. A place of *torment*. *Mat*----*Their worm dieth not*, alluding to that worm that breeds in, and feeds on the body, is lying gnawing and cannot be cured.

Their fire goes not out: Fire is the moſt quick and active, the moſt tormenting and torturing Element. It's *Brimſtone* that is the fuel, which is a moſt combuſtible, noiſom and ſuffocating matter.

It's call'd *utter darkneſs*: Darkneſs is a moſt dreadful and diſconſolating thing, as that of *Egypt*: For the company, it is only wicked perſons perfect in ſin, and moſt wretched Devils, the worſt of Creatures: *Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*.

O how hot and ſcorching muſt that fire be, that purpoſely is prepared for utmoſt torment? Not like *Nebuchadnezzars* Furnace ſeven times hoter, but ſeventy times hoter, that which is inconceivable.

In Scripture, Hell or the ſtate of miſery, is expreſt by the terms of *ſecond death*; death, one death in any kind is very dreadful, above all other things: but after *dying a firſt death*, then to come and dye a *ſecond death*, and this not ſo eaſie as dying any bodily death millions of times over. If a Malefactor ſhould die the moſt cruel death, and *then be made to live again*, and then *die that death* a ſecond time, yea thouſands and thouſands of times over, O how ſad were the caſe of that perſon, that muſt be ſo under the both fears of that death firſt, and then the torments and pains! But what is all this to this

ſecond

ſecond death, being under the fullneſs of infinite wrath, and that for ever?

The *inflicter* of this miſery, is no leſs than an infinitely wiſe, holy, ſin hating, and an omnipotent God: *acting* in the pureſt and fierceſt wrath, *endeavouring* the fulleſt revenge the damned creature is capable of, and for which it *purpoſely* is made a veſſel of wrath, and that veſſel is *prepared* to receive and hold this wrath.

1. Prepared by being *widened*, *extended*, as it were, to receive the *fulneſs* of wrath. As the Saints ſhall have their ſpirits elevated and extended, to the utmoſt, to be made fit to receive the fulneſs of glory and happineſs: ſo the damned have their *ſpirits widened* and enlarged, their *underſtandings* and *hearts* in the *utmoſt extenſiveneſs*, that they be brimfull of wrath.

2. Prepared by being purpoſely *ſtrengthened* to the utmoſt, as Veſſels are made ſtrong to hold the ſtrongeſt Wine or Liquor, to hold and keep in that wrath poured into them.

Were Hell but to have the leaſt torment in the leaſt member, or ſenſible part, as in the Toe, Finger, or the like for ever: or but one torment in a noble part, Head, Liver, Heart, or a *complication* of many ſad diſeaſes for ever; how intolerably ſad were this ſtate? but to *have all poſſible* trouble and torment both in body and ſoul, ſet on by a God for ever: O how unſpeakably ſad is this?

All the forenamed, this *impriſonment*, this tormenting, this worm, this fire, the weepings, the wailings, the gnaſhing of teeth, is not for an *hour*, a *day*, a *month*, a *year*, an *age*, nor a *thouſand years* or *ages*, or what can be reckon'd, *by millions of millions*,

millions, but for ever; no *reſt for ever*, no *eaſe for ever*, no hope of any deliverance, or *degree* of it for ever: but ſorrow, torment, and terrour, ſinking in deſpair and hopeleſneſs for ever, ever, ever.

O then to improve this Meditation, and make it operative upon my ſpirit, Let me firſt look upon Hell begun, in that terrour and horrour, the wicked inſtantly upon their raiſing up from the dead, and changed, are ſeized with: The hot burning Coals of Hell are thrown into their boſom, fill them up and lie burning and ſcorching, as they are both *bringing* to the judgment ſeat, and *are ſtanding* before Chriſt at the Bar, all the *time* of their arraignment. Never did any poor guilty priſoner ſtand *in ſuch a fear* as this fear, and were ſo amazed.

2. *The then unſpeakable ſhame.* Then all *the time* of their arraignment, and eſpecially on the pronouncing of that dreadful ſentence which will be paſſed and executed: O what muſt be the unſpeakable ſhame, mixt with the continuing and encreaſing ſad horrour, *Dan.* 13.

O what muſt be *that ſhame*, when all things poſſible concur, to load and cover them with ſhame? never was there nor can be *ſuch a ſhame* poured upon any.

A ſhame in the *greateſt concourſe*, that ever was, or can be; all the Saints and Angels, yea all the wicked and the Devils, every particular aſhamed, alſo before all their own company, in this ſo deſperate ſtate. 3. And eſpecially a tranſcendent *ſhame*, in reſpect of the *infinitely glorious* Judge, the Lord Jeſus, deſpiſed and ſinned ſo againſt by ſo many.

Ah

Ah what muſt be the ſhame of wicked men, to ſtand uncover'd, with open faces, to ſee the ſo *dreadful Judge*, looking the arraigned perſon full in *the face*, looking with the moſt *wiſhly* Eye, and *ſtern countenance* upon, I ſay, their *uncover'd faces*? to have all their ſins ript up, every one adding ſtill to the ſhame; but then when the dreadful ſentence paſſes, O what the ſhame will farther then be?

And yet far more, when the ſentence is Executed, they driven away, and all Devils and men, thruſt into the Dungeon of darkneſs, what an everlaſting ſhame will that be? Now, O now to think of all their unexpreſſible loſſes, of ſuch a Bill of loſſes, as never was ſeen; loſs of God himſelf, his face and communion with him, Father, Son, and Spirit; loſs of the company of all the Saints and Angels, loſt Heaven, and all its glory loſt, and all that happineſs that ariſes from all; ſuch a ſtate as is ſo good and glorious, to that utmoſt poſſibility as the Creature is ſuſceptive of and can have; and for that *ſo all ſweetning* and ſatiating eternity: And then, which greatly aggravates the miſery, as Chriſt himſelf expreſſes it, *Luke* 13. 28. *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, when ye ſhall ſee* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *and all, &c.* So to ſee all the Saints, to ſee all the godly Patriarchs, *Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob*, and all the other.

To ſee *Moſes, Samuel, David*, and all the holy Prophets, to ſee all the bleſſed Apoſtles, *Peter, John, Paul*, and all the *Diſciples* of Chriſt, with all the glorious *Martyrs*, and *Confeſſors*, in all times; and all the innumerable company of *Saints*, in both former, preſent, and after Ages; all theſe known in their

their times; but neglected, ſcorned, oppoſed, perſecuted, and deſtroyed, yet all theſe to be taken up with Chriſt into Heaven; but as other ſinners, ſo thy woful ſelf dying without a Chriſt, ſhut out, and have Heaven Gates ſhut up, lockt and barr'd againſt thee for ever; and withal alſo, ah lockt up faſt in the Dungeon of darkneſs, and fill'd up full in ſoul and body, with unſpeakable torment never to end.

And to realize this more, and make it more effectual on thee that art ſaved, after the Judgment is ended, ſentence of condemnation paſſed, let me imagine my ſelf looking after this *Herd of Goats*, all driving down headlong to the *Lake of fire* and Brimſtone, ſeeing them *taken hold of*, and *haled* to the Priſon of Hell, and immediately ſhut in, preſently ſeis'd with wrath and torment, fill'd brim full up, with unſpeakable woe and torture.

Then could I but go near, *lay my ear* to the door of this Priſon, and liſten earneſtly, O what would be the *dolours*, the groanings, cryings, roarings, yellings, ſhriekings, that ſo many, & many thouſands, *altogether tortured*, would be heard to make. The noiſe of a few Priſoners *condemning*, of Paſſengers in a Ship *drowning*, of men in Battel *killing and dying*, makes a moſt hideous *impreſſion*, makes a mans ears to tingle, and his heart to ake and tremble: But, O what is, or can be like unto this hideous noiſe and cry, of ſo many innumerable millions, of all ſorts and ſexes, men and women, under ſuch intolerable torments? O but might I have *liberty* and *ſecurity* to make an *ocular obſervation*, with my eyes to ſee the *Gates* of that horrid place open, to ſee *the lake* of Fire and Brimſtone flaming, *to look in* and

and ſee the tormented in their ſo woful condition, *moſt ſad poſtures* and *behaviours*: All the multitudes and throngs of perſons, and the perſons in *particular* I deſire to ſee and view. There I might ſee that firſt Murderer *Cain*, appearing in his Chains and Tortures, and on my demanding who he was, he *anſwers*, I am that curſed one, that kill'd my righteous Brother *Abel*; here, here I have bin already, ſo many thouſands of years, and here I muſt remain to be tormented for ever.

In *another place* appears another, it may be *wicked Saul*, that perſecuter of holy *David*; in another *Achitophel*, or *Haman*, *Herod*, *Judas*, and abundance of ſuch *ſtrewed all over* this Priſon: Sinners of all ſorts, Idolaters, Superſtitious, Prophane, Wizards, Witches, Swearers, Curſers, Prophaners of the day of God, with diſobedient to Parents, Murderers, Adulterers, Thieves, Lyars, Covetous, and all others of ſeveral Sexes, Ranks, and Conditions.

If I might *ask* and *be anſwered*, upon enquiry, by the perſons I ſee there, would not one come and ſay, *I am ſuch a one*, another ſay, *I am ſuch*; and ſo others? Would not one come and ſhew me, there in ſuch a place are thoſe that were *drowned by the Deluge*; there are the *Sodomites* burnt with fire and Brimſtone; *there*'s *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, thoſe drowned in the Red Sea; there's ſuch and ſuch Enemies and Perſecuters of Chriſt and his Church of old; there are the *heathen Perſecuters*, and the Antichriſtian Enemies; there *ſuch Apoſtates*, ſuch Hypocrites, ſuch *looſe Chriſtians*; in this *place* ſuch a man or ſuch a woman you knew, and in that *place* another; there you ſee them, and in the ſame ſad caſe with my ſelf?

But

But ſhould I *ask* of their ſeveral conditions, and what they continually feel, O what *doleful Relations* would they give in, of the *ſcorchings* of that fire, of the *gnawing* of that never dying worm, of their *deepeſt ſorrows*, *higheſt fears*; and above all, of their *overwhelming* and unſpeakable deſpairs? *Prov.* 18. 14. Here when God ſuffers *but a ſpark to flye out of the Furnace of Hell, and fall into a ſinners boſom*, as *Judas*, *Math.* 27. 5. O how intolerable doth it prove? But when the *whole pile of Hell's fuel and fire* ſhall be laid and faſtned on ſinners by the hand of an Almighty God; O what muſt that torment and that deſpair amount unto, and then when under *infallible certainty* of a lengthening out to all Eternity?

O let every one Meditate *often* and *moſt ſeriouſly*, of this *ſo dreadful ſtate*; not be *ſhye* of a looking this way, of a *looking into this Lake* of Fire, and *realizing* all the ſo dreadful things comprehended in it: Not contenting thy ſelf with *thy yieldings and giving it for granted*, and never ponder, never labour to any purpoſe, to be rightly affected, ſtirred up to take a ſure courſe for eſcaping it. But let this *terrour of the Lord*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. awaken, provoke, and perſwade every one to flye from this wrath to come; and flye to that Chriſt, make ſure of him that only can deliver us.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Of Heaven and Happineſs Eternal.

THE laſt thing I ſhall mention in this part of ſolemn and ſet Meditation, is that of Heaven, and Happineſs Eternal therein; Hell is not *ſo miſerable* a ſtate, but Heaven is as tranſcendently glorious and happy: The one being purpoſely for *demonſtration* of the fulneſs of Gods hatred and wrath, the other for the *higheſt manifeſtation* of the riches of Mercy and Free Grace. Yea this being the thing the Lord is ſo infinitely pleaſed and delighted in, muſt needs have *the fulleſt* and moſt glorious manifeſtation that is any way poſſible for a *God* to make, and his Creatures can be *apprehenſive* and *receptive* of, and therefore *the ſtate of Glory muſt be glorious* indeed, *Eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for ſuch as love him.* There he is ſpeaking of things but *diſpoſitive* to happineſs, the bleſſings of Grace, Peace, Joy, and heavenly Priviledges given in Chriſt: but then, if happineſs only begun, be ſo glorious, O what is *happineſs finiſhed up*, and conſummate?

For our way of proceeding in this Meditation, I conceive it beſt, by *laying a full* Scripture ground, in *gathering* thoſe choice Flowers, ſpringing up thick, in the *rich Garden ſtores* of the infallible Scriptures, and are purpoſely *growing there* for the hand of *faith to gather*, and the *Eye* of our dim weak ſight,

to

to be healed and cleared, to believe and ſee the glory of Heaven by.

It is not a way of meer *general thinkings*, or that of *Phanſie* or *Speculation* of our own, but firſt *laying a Scripture, great and firm foundation*: And then after to improve thoſe Scripture aſſertions, by all *the ability* and help we can, of *Reaſon* and *Inferences* of beſt *Repreſentations* and *Reſemblances*, of *Imagination* and *Invention*.

General apprehenſions, and *grantings of Scripture truths, deceive and deſtroy many*, when they are reſted in: General *notions* of Heaven and happineſs; granting it there is a Heaven and *no more*, makes many miſs of it, miſs for want of *more diſtinct apprehenſions*, *well grounded* believing, and *due deep ſinking of it* to the bottom of the heart, there to lie *glowing*, to warm and kindle the affections, to provoke into a labouring, a mighty ſtriving to win the Crown of glory.

The way is (as wiſdom in all other caſes of conſequence teaches) *to come off every day from general confuſed thoughts of Heaven and happineſs*, reſtings on and runnings away with a ſuppoſed doing enough.

If we ſtill grant there's a Heaven and Happineſs, every day to *endeavour diſtincter* and clearer thoughts and knowledge.

Generals will not ſerve, *grantings* muſt not be made *the enough of a wiſe Chriſtian*, he muſt have an *extenſive and enlarging clearneſs*, *an encreaſing firmneſs* of Faith, in the Doctrines, the great points of ſalvation. But we having this ſo prime an Article of faith, that which hath *wrapt up in it* ſo rich a Treaſure

and

and *preſerves*, as it were, that ſo ineſtimable Jewel of happineſs, mans laſt end; that which is the great foundation and inſtigation of all a Chriſtians ſtrivings and hopes (for he hath no hope in this life for happineſs here.)

This therefore ſhould not be *turned off*, nor *terminated* (as too oft is done) with *a granting* or *bare aſſent*; but ſtill obtain of us a fuller, firmer, warmer, and more operative ſeeing and belief.

Now this cannot be, without *diligent gathering in*, and *better ſtill Meditating* on particular *Scriptures*, *aſſerting*, and *clearly manifeſting* this main Article, and mans chief end compriſed in it.

The Jewiſh Church had this typified in the Holy of Holies, as *Heb.* 9. 3. 12. 24. *Chriſt is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which were the Figures of the true, but into Heaven it ſelf.* This was, that by the viſible place, faith might be ſtirr'd up, to *eye* and *view* the inviſible typified ſtate of glory.

Pſal. 73. 24. *David* tells us of it, and was aſſured *to be received up into glory*; that is into Heaven in glory. *Dan.* 12. 23. *Of them that ſleep in the duſt, ſome ſhall awake to everlaſting life, and ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and ſome as the ſtars for ever.*

The *Church* of the *New Teſtament*, in the writings given by Chriſt to it, have this Doctrine of Heaven and happineſs, abundantly and moſt clearly ſet forth. The firſt mentionings of it, are out of the mouth of him, that with the Father and Holy Spirit made it. *Math.* 5. 3. in Chriſts firſt Sermon, *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* So *verſe* 10, 12. *The perſecuted*

for righteousness, theirs is, &c. verse 20. Mention there is again of it, *Verse* 34. and *v.* 45. and 48. *Chap.* 6. *v.* 1. *v.* 9. The *first passage* in the Lord's Prayer. *At least twelve several times* in this first Sermon of Christ this Heaven is mentioned. And as in the Gospels, so all the New Testament over, you may, *many scores of times*, find and see it lying, as a *most shining and glorious Diamond* in the Mine, or as in a rich Cabinet, for to be viewed and laboured for. The multitudes of places, well weighed, must needs hold forth, to all that shut not their eyes wilfully, *a Local Heaven*, a place of happiness and glory.

It is no *Allegorical Heaven*, as some have dream'd, or may ignorantly imagine: when it is asserted in so many clear passages, which, all of them, in our reading or hearings, should have their *due weight*, weight of thinkings, and *efficacy on us*, for firm believing, and answerable endeavours for not losing, but enjoying it.

For *the rank of places*, what it hath, the *Scripture* tells us, it is *the third Heaven*; the first being that where the Clouds are; the second where the glorious Lights, Sun, Moon, and Stars are; this third above them all, call'd therefore the *highest Heaven*. This *third* and *highest Heaven* is most inconceivably excellent; not made of any *preceding* matter, much less of any *elementary* matter. Some say it was made immediately of nothing, and with it were also made, *concreated*, the Angels; all at the same instant, Heaven never being empty of Inhabitants.

The Sun, Moon, and Stars were *made*, not the first day, but the fourth day, for Furniture of

of that Heaven, under the *highest Heaven.*

2. It is the largeſt, and *moſt capacious place*, as that which *compriſes* or ſurrounds all the inferiour *world*, and *things* in *that.*

O here, here is *Rechaboth*, room enough.

In this world, here's *crowding*, *puſhing*, *cruſhing*, of the Saints: The wicked world would quite *caſt them*, every one, out of it, to be left alone and enjoy all, to be let alone, and have none to ſee and ſhame them any way: But the Saints ſhall all be brought at laſt, into a *large place*, where none ſhall moleſt or trouble them. Heaven is a *Rechaboth* indeed, a *moſt large place.*

The *Globe of the whole Earth and Water*, is, as Geographers tell us, at the leaſt, one and twenty thouſand and ſix hundred Miles in compaſs. The *Air* above encompaſſing in that, and *eſpecially the uppermoſt part* of the Air, muſt needs be far more in compaſs than the Earth and Water.

The *Moon alone* is very great, though ſomething leſs than the Earth; ſome of the Planets are judged *far greater* than the *Globe* of the *Earth.* The *Sun by ſome* is judged to be *one hundred ſixty ſix times* greater than the *whole Earths Globe*; which *others* make yet far greater: which then muſt be ſome *millions of miles in compaſs*, according to that account. The *fixed Stars*, which all are above the higheſt Planet *Saturn*, are by the *Learned*, every of them, judged *greater* than *all the Earth*; the leaſt of them *eighteen times bigger* than the Earth; thoſe of the higheſt magnitude, and the moſt glorious brightneſs, *an hundred and eighteen times bigger* than the whole Earth. Of theſe *fixed Stars* who can tell the numbers of them? thoſe which are

reckon'd, are but ſome hundreds in their Conſtellations. How exceeding then vaſt muſt *this ſtarry Heaven* be, if the *Planets* and *fixed Stars* in it, are ſo great and numerous?

O then how *unſpeakably vaſt* and large muſt this *third Heaven* be which compaſſes round all the *Earth*, *Air*, and *the ſtarry Heavens*? What a Kingdom for *Territories* is this? *What a place* for Chriſt to prepare Manſions for his in? What a place for the *all-glorious God* and *Jeſus Chriſt* to keep a Court in *higheſt ſplendour* and *magnificence* in? And the *Lord Jeſus* the Saviour, that purchaſed this inheritance with his *own blood*, for him to be ever *viewed*, *loved*, *admired*, *glorified* by all his Saints to the higheſt in?

Of all imaginable places, this, this is the place, this is Room, this is a place ſo *large* as the *hearts* of the *Saints* can wiſh.

3. As *Heaven* is the *largeſt* for *capacity* and *quantity*, ſo is it the *beſt* place for *quality* and *excellency*. 2 *Cor.* 12. It is called *Paradiſe* by that bleſſed *Paul* who was taken up thither, to tell upon his return what a *place* it was. *Paradiſe* mentioned, *Gen.* 2. 8. it was the *beſt place* that ever was on Earth; it was the *ſummary* of all *neceſſaries* and *delicacies* for *Adam*, in that *perfect ſtate*, his *accommodations*, *recreations*, and *abundant delight*; fit therefore to reſemble the *place of glory* by. And ſo our Lord Chriſt thought, when he calls it by this name of *Paradiſe*; *Luke* 23. 43. *To day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*: The *beſt place it was made*, becauſe for the *beſt Creature on Earth*.

Luke 16. *It is called Abraham's boſom*: *Abraham* in his time was the moſt eminent perſon living, call'd

call'd *the Father of the faithful*: No place for a Child can be ſo proper, ſo deſirable, pleaſing, and contenting as the moſt loving tender Fathers Boſom; O how a Child loves the Boſom! O how deſirous are the Children of *Abraham* to be in his Boſom.

In other places, it is *a place of glory, riches of glory, a Kingdom, a Crown of glory, an eternal weight of glory*; a ſtate where there are *Pleaſures for evermore, Rivers of pleaſures, joys and fullneſs of joy.*

For every Saint the *higheſt entertainments*, in all reſpects; for the *Senſes.*

1. The *Ear* hath ſuch *raviſhing Muſick* and *melody*, as that beſt and greateſt Conſort, of all the *innumerable companies* of *Saints* and *Angels*, can make.

2. For the *Eye*, the Palace of *Heaven* is unſpeakably beyond all places, proſpects, and objects, that Nature and Art could ever yield.

The *perſons of the Saints*, as to the numbers ſo innumerable, muſt needs make up the rareſt Train and ſhew (as to their ſorts and differences) that ever Eye ſaw. O what a *raviſhing ſight* muſt that be to ſee *Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob*, and all the Holy Patriarchs? *Moſes, Samuel, David*, and all the Holy Prophets? *Peter, Paul, John*, and all the Holy Apoſtles? All the bleſſed and *glorious Martyrs* of *Jeſus Chriſt*? All his *godly and ſerviceable*, painful and *laborious Miniſters*? All the *precious Saints*, Kings, and Governours, and others that are recorded in the Bible: And not only Men, but holy Women, *Sarah, Hannah, Ruth, Eſther*, and others in the Old Teſtament; the *bleſſed Virgin*, and *Eli-*

zabeth, with the *Women* that followed Christ, and ministred unto him, *Mary Magdalen*, *Johanna*, *Susanna*, *Lydia*, *Dorcas*, *Priscilla* among the Apostles helping them, *all the Disciples of Christ* which believed in him: with all the *eminent godly lights* in the Church after the Apostles; and *all the Saints* in all after Ages to the worlds end?

And then for all this Train, in their sorts and ranks; *as to their bodies*, to be so all over glorious, *to shine as the Sun, and brightness of the Firmament for ever*, O what a *shew* and *ravishing* entertainment is here for the Eye!

But that which is the *top and height*, and far surpassing all the other, is *that sweetest, most ravishing sight* of the most *glorious body of Jesus Christ*; The highest beauty that ever *Eye* beheld or saw, far outshining all others, as the Sun exceeds the Stars: Ah *here, here* will be a sight indeed.

Ah but then to *behold* him in his *highest discoveries* of his sweetest, loveliest lookings and smilings on all his Saints with him, and upon thee in particular.

To *see his countenance compos'd* and ordered, purposely to *beam forth* in fullest Manifestations of *surpassing sweetness* of most *intense affections* towards his so dearly beloved Bride, now present with him in the glorious Bed-Chamber to behold him and enjoy perfect communion with him.

3. O but what entertainments are there, *as to the soul and spirit*, for the faculties of *Understanding*, *Will*, and *Affections*? how far transcending those of the *Senses*? as the beatifical *vision*, seeing God face to face, with all intellectual satisfaction as to all the *truths* in the Word of God, all *Mysteries*, *Pro-*

phecies,

species, and *difficulties*, and *whatsoever may conduce* to the glorious *happiness* of the Saints: *satisfaction* also, as to the *works* and *ways* of God, Creation and Providence, all the Riddles and dark things so far made known as is needful.

Likewise as to the will and heart, the beatifical fruition, *enjoying of God*, Father, Son, and Spirit, and his infinite sweetness, to all possible *fullness* and *perfection*.

Likewise all happy communion with Saints and Angels, to all *delight* and *pleasure*. And for all this both body and Soul are *prepared*, *strengthened*, *elevated*, and *enlarged* to the utmost extensiveness.

As all imperfections and sins are utterly remov'd, so all *grace* and *holiness*, *light* and *wisdom*, *heat* and *flame* of heart *communicated*, and in a *blessed reciprocation*, a mutual acting: God the *infinitely all-sufficient*, communicating himself to the *glorified*, to their utmost capacity; and they reacting and putting forth their *grace* and *holiness*, to their *utmost ability*: O how unspeakably sweet and satiating must this continual intercourse be?

For the close of all, let me think my self, after a glorious and *blessed Resurrection* and *absolution* by Christ at the Judgment day, freed utterly from all evil; *feeling* likewise my compleat happiness coming on so fast *in my now passage* up to the place of *glory*; and then *instantly finding it finisht*, finisht on the *first setting my foot*, as it were, within the Gate of Heaven. And now I think, what a prepared and furnished place I am in: What *company* of the Saints, Angels, and Jesus Christ also I have: What *fruition* of the *most blessed God*; what *sense* of the *pleasures*, *joys*, *satisfactions*, and most *ravishing* sweet-

ness, under all ſecurity, under that which ſuperadded *heightens* and *ſweetens* all the reſt, the Charter of *inconceivable eternity*: Ah then, let my *frequent* and *intenſeſt* thinkings be, not a looking down to *Earth*, but up to *Heaven*, breathing my ſoul up the *Hill* to *this City of God*, in contemplating the *Glories of it*; often let me walk this ſo pleaſant walk. Who will look and pore on a dark Dungeon, that hath the Sun to behold? who will, (that means to hit the mark) look quite beſides it? who is it can go to Heaven, that thinks moſt another way? that hath a *down-look*, as we ſay; a *Beaſts Eye*, that hath no *Muſcle of elevation*? Ah ſuch as *look moſt* will *long moſt* after, labour moſt for it. O therefore, let my Eye every day be *walking to* and *in* this *Paradiſe*, *ſolace it ſelf* in taking *a turn* ſtill there, be walking in this *upper Eye-walk* by Meditation, till I come to ſee *God face to face*, till I *look my ſelf* into this *Heaven I look on*.

I have now diſpatcht this point of *Occaſional ſet Meditation*, as to the firſt branch: Meditation of ſuch things we our ſelves ſingle out, and ſet before us, and take ſome ſpecial times for, which were in theſe particulars.

1. Meditation on *ſome paſſage* or portion of Scripture.

2. Or going over the *chief points* of Religion in order.

3. Meditating of *ſome of the works* of God.

4. Or ſomething of my *own ſpiritual ſtate*, to make me more wiſe or warm, or active for God.

5. Or *how the caſe* of my ſoul ſtands.

6. Or of *my own evil hearts* deceitfulneſs.

7. Of *my Enemies*, Satan and the World.

8. Of

8. Of *my wants* and weakneſs of *Grace.*
9. Of the *ſwift paſſing* of time and opportunities.
10. Of the *ſhortneſs* of my life.
11. Of *death* of the body.
12. Of *Judgment* after death; and of the *Laſt Judgment.*
13. Of *death* Eternal, and *Hell.*
14. Of *Heaven* and Eternal *happineſs.*

Theſe are the heads of this firſt Branch.

CHAP. XXIII.

Meditation on ſome things providential.

THere is but this one thing (which I will briefly diſpatch) remaining yet to be ſpoken of; and then I come to the laſt ſort of Meditation, that is by a *ſhort* and more *ſudden* way, *Ejaculatory Meditation.* I ſay there ſhould be Meditation *on ſomething providential*, a matter the *hand of providence* acts or orders, *holds forth* and *offers* to our viewing and ſerious thinkings. The *great God*, as he always is *guiding* and *ordering* all things in all places, in *Heaven*, *Earth*, and *Waters*, and among all *Creatures*, eſpecially the *reaſonable*, and chiefly *above all* in his *Church*, and for his Saints, againſt his and their Enemies. As he is *guiding* with his hand, all *the concerns of particular perſons* to the ſupream end, his own glory, and likewiſe infallibly to the ſalvation of his *Redeemed*: ſo there is ever and anon ſomething *obſervable*, *particularly providential*; ſomething

thing which as the *hand* of *providence* holdeth forth, ſo the *heart of prudence* and godly wiſdom will take up; that purpoſely it will ſet it ſelf to *ſee*, *ſearch*, and *improve*; as it may be ſomething ſometime of the *Church* of *God* abroad, or ſomething of the People of God at home, or in the place particularly we live in: It may be there is ſome diſpenſation, to ſome of our Relations or Friends, or ſome matter falls out in our Family, or yet nearer on our perſon and perſonal concerns.

There is ſeldom any *ſpace of time*, but the great Governour of the World is doing *ſome remarkable* thing, it may be ſome *admirable and glorious*, it may be ſome *amazing* and *ſtupendious*, it may be ſome *terrible* and *very dreadful* work, if we have our eyes in exerciſe, and will obſerve.

Indeed Gods goings ſometimes, *Pſal.* 77. 19. *His footſteps cannot be ſeen*, but are very ſecret and unſearchable. And there are others of his workings, which are more eaſie for all to behold and underſtand.

There are varieties of Providences, ſucceſſively following each others; which we ſhould wait and watch for, which we ſhould take, as they come, *freſh* and *warm* out of the Lords hand, and apply them *warm* to our *hearts* for a more kindly operation.

Meditate we ſhould upon Providences, while they are *juſt new and freſh*, ſo we ſhall give them, or rather our ſelves, the advantage of a more ready and affectionate pondering, a more profitable minding. If I could *ſtill improve* in Meditation of the Promiſes, and in a wiſe, warm, lively alſo *Meditating of providences*, in the one ſee *better daily* the riches of free Grace, in the other the *glorious governings* of

of a God in *wiſdom*, *righteouſneſs*, and *goodneſs*: How would my ſpirit, *under the dews* of this fruitful *Meditation*, be ſhooting up? how would it proſper? They are the *higheſt form Chriſtians*, that are arrived here, at the contemplation of the works and *great providences* of God in the world.

In 1 *John* 2. 13. He writes to ſome he calls Fathers, others young men, others Children. Some by Children underſtand, ſuch as are (as to Meditation) taken up with the *promiſes*, and *matters* of *juſtification*, *pardon*, and *peace*; young men, are ſuch who are gotten farther, and exercis'd about ſanctification, and conquering ſtrong corruptions.

Fathers, that beyond both, are taken up, and ariv'd at ponderings, and contemplations of the *works* and *ways of God*, and his great actings in the world.

So it is ſometimes needful to Meditate on the Providences that are *more obliging* and *engaging*, *more awakening* and inciting, ſuch as are as it were the *ſpecial hand of the Lord touching us*, *taking hold of us*, framing and ordering things for us. And here there is great reaſon, our Meditation ſhould be more ſerious and curious: as wherein we may ſee Gods ſo particular goings and workings toward us, and for us.

Pſal. 18. All that excellent *Pſalm* over, *David* there enumerates and records all Gods goings towards him. O then with the Pſalmiſt, let my ſoul meditate on all the works of God; *liſt* and *file* up the *diſpenſations* of his *obſervable providences* towards others and my ſelf: Meditate on his ſo *merciful preſervings*, *directings*, *proſperings*, and all other ſorts and ways of *Providence*; that I may *admire* and exalt

exalt him, *depend*, and *truſt*, and wait upon him, and *walk* ſo before him, that his ways may ever be *mercy* and *truth* towards me.

I have now diſpatcht the *ſecond branch* of Meditation on particular *Providences*; and thereby the ſecond *general kind* of *Meditation*; which is, *ſet* and *occaſional Meditation* at particular times of leiſure.

The laſt ſort of Meditation comes now to be handled.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of more ſhort and ejaculatory Meditation.

BEſides ſolemn and ſet *Meditation*, there is alſo that which is *ſudden* and *ſhort*, wherein the ſoul acts, as one breaking out of a *Throng* or *Crowd*, *goes aſide* from diſturbances and diverſions, or *breaks off* from ſome preſent and too preſſing buſineſs, to take *breath* and *reſpite* it ſelf; whereby it makes a *ſtand of thoughts*, turns the *ſtream* of former *thoughts*, and like a Bird that was ſitting on the ground, *riſes* and *mounts* up aloft, to ſing and ſport it ſelf; even ſo a holy heart, in *heavenly mindedneſs*, will *get out* of the *throng* of *cares* and *buſineſs*, will be often breaking off the *thread of earthly thoughts*, and interpoſe ſome *heavenly*, *dart up* to Heaven, make *a ſhort viſit* thither, *refreſh it ſelf* with ſome heavenly dainty, take and taſte of the *Manna above*, look up to God, to Chriſt, his Spirit, his Grace, his Promiſes, his Providences and gracious orderings,

have

have a running Banquet of heavenly ſweet-meats, when it cannot ſit down and feed at large by a fuller ſet Meditation.

As there are *ejaculatory Prayers* and wiſhes, when there is not opportunity for more ſolemn enlargements; there ſhould be alſo *ſudden* and *ſhort meditatings*, quick *interpoſings* of good and holy thoughts, then when the urgencies of Affairs, incumbrances, diverſions and interruptions by company, hindrances in any kind, will not admit the opportunity of *an abode of ſerious thoughts*; then *ſudden dartings* up the ſoul to Heaven may be had, be *a refreſhment*; as *Jonathans* taſting the *Honey*, with the top of his Rod, when being in *purſuit* of the *Philiſtines* he could not take a *full meal*. *David* (that *meditated* ſo much) muſt needs, in reſpect of his great occaſions (*Civil*, and *Military*, and *Domeſtick*) make much uſe of this *ſhort way of Meditation*, when he often could not go the *other larger way*.

As he was frequent in his *ſudden ſhort prayings*, ſo muſt he be much in *ſhort ſudden meditatings*, which were the ground commonly of his *prayings*.

The *Pſalms* ſhew his *frequent uſing* this *ſhort way of meditation* and *praying*: Thus *Pſal.* 15. a *Pſalm* of but five *verſes*. So *Pſal.* 127. a *Pſalm* of five *verſes*: and *Pſal.* 125. the like: and *Pſal.* 123. hath a *Meditation* of four *verſes*: *Pſal.* 131. is a *Meditation* of three *verſes*: and *Pſal.* 117. is a *Meditation* of but two *verſes*: yet the *ſpirit* of God is pleas'd to have it *recorded*. Many other *Pſalms* we have very ſhort, that were his quick Meditations, left all for teaching us to do likewiſe, looking on his example.

This *Meditation*, though of *ſhorter time*, yet ſo far

far as we can, must have its *Regulation* and *Government*.

1. It should (so near as we can) have its *stamp* and *ingredient* of *holy reverence*.

All thoughts of *holy things* must not be (how sudden soever) acts *of rashness and over-haste*, without heed and fear; the *name of a glorious God* is upon every *Ordinance*, that must not be *taken in vain*.

2. It should be *the product and issue of holy lingering after God and communion with him*; from a *thirsting* for God to *taste a little*, when we cannot have fuller draughts of him.

3. It should be the *glance of a spiritual Eye*, looking *from love, being enamoured with God and Christ, and heavenly things*: Not a looking *from Custom*, and an use to *satisfie conscience*, calling for something may look like a Duty; but from the *strength* and *predominancy* of the fire of heavenly love: *Psal.* 119. 97. *O how love I thy Law, its my Meditation all the day*: As other, so this sort of *Meditation*, must have a rise from love. Love breeds longing and looking, it *introduces a pleasure* in a looking, though but a glancing of the Eye, on the *surpassing beauty and loveliness* of God and Jesus Christ, and the glorious things of Heaven.

Ah how excellent is this frame of spirit, how *sweet* and *pleasant* is it to have the Eye often on these so rare beauties, from being, as *the Spouse* in the Canticles, *both really and deeply in love*!

4. It should be *aim'd* and *level'd* at the right mark, *pleasing* and *glorifying God*, and for *communion* farther with him, that he may see how *the pulse of our Souls beats*, how *the Eye looks*, how we act,

act, and how our hearts *make ſtill their holy eſcapes* from the *crowd*, and *obſtruclings* of *occaſions*, to give him a *friendly*, *ſpiritual* viſit, to let him ſee the *fervour* of our *love* by *endeavours* ſo oft as we can, to do him *homage* and *honour*: As when we would ſhew our high reſpect and honour to any perſon, we make the more *frequent viſits*, when we cannot make *long ſtay*. So here when *throngs* of *indiſpenſable occaſions*, hinder the ſet and larger *engagements* in *Meditation*, make we it up *in ſhorter viſits*, in often thinkings; *ſhort viſits rightly aim'd bring ſweet peace.*

Let it not be therefore *ſo haſty*, as we obſerve ſome Children, call'd to go to a place, *that run without their errand*, to act without aim; right aiming *the end lays the foundation* of a Dutys excellency: O let my *ſpirit*, if I cannot think and dwell long upon *heavenly things*, through *weakneſs*, let it make up the defect *by thinking often*. Let the *dartings upward* be the *livelier* and *thicker*, like a *Golden Chain* which is very long, though the *Links* be very little.

O let me trade, drive a quick *trade with littles*; *light gains make a heavy purſe*, little *frequent tradings* will gain me much here.

This ſhort often acting up, will make my heart keep ſtill *open to Heaven*; keep the *path-way* thither *beaten plain*, *eaſie*, and ſo make it *pleaſant* for my *ſpirit* to walk in, make this *Meditation* highly ſweet, a rare *refreſhing*.

The *frequencies* of *thinkings heaven-ward*, will have this threefold advantage, theſe three excellent fruits.

1. Frequencies of *heavenly thoughts* will breed and

and cheriſh an *habitual heavenly mindedneſs* unto that *primitive Grace*, that habit of *regenerating Grace* (which brings a *tendency*, and *bent* of ſoul, making it incline *heavenward*) it will *ſuperadde* an habitual *heavenly mindedneſs*, a heart peculiarly and powerfully ready, and active *heavenward*. As an *Artiſt* which hath not only *reaſon* firſt to diſpoſe him, fit him for his Trade, but the peculiar habit, a head and hand for it to underſtand and act as an Artiſt.

2. The frequencies of *heavenly*, will thereby be *an excluſive* and *thruſter out* of *earthly thoughts*, the *right way* of a *compendious cure*: It's not the way ſo much to *ſtand watching*, and *ſtriving* to drive them away; to be on *the defenſive barely*, but to be on *the poſitive*, in *acting good thoughts*, that *will keep out bad*. As if Wine firſt fills the Veſſel, there is no room for Water: if a *Treaſury* be full of Gold, there is no room for *rubbiſh*.

3. This frequent *ſhort darting* upward, will end with leaving an *after ſweetneſs* upon the *palate* of the ſpirit; *ſhort*, *when heavenly*, *will be ſweet*, as every *crum of Sugar* leaves ſome ſweetneſs on the palate; *every drop* of pure *live honey*, a delicious after reliſh, ſo this ſhort Meditation.

The *Manna* that dewed down upon the *Iſraelites* Camp, lay like ſmall *Coriander* ſeeds; which they gathered, ground, and made their Bread of, which had a rare reliſh.

This ſort of Meditation may gather ſtill ſome little ſeeds of *heavenly Manna*, ſoul-Bread, with new freſh delicious ſweetneſs following.

The heavenly minded perſon may, as the manner of ſome is, *go ever with ſome rich taſted, and ſcented thing in the mouth*. When-

Whenſoever cares and diverſions *preſs hard*, hang *heavy*, draw *ſtrongly*, greatly *diſquiet*, and weary thy ſpirit; here is *an out-let*, an eſcape, a rare way of interpoſition and *ſoul eaſing diverſion*, yea of a ſhort though ſweet, and *heavenly ſolace*.

It may be lookt on as a *ſhadow*, a *reſemblance* of the *bleſſed Apoſtles ſudden carrying* into the *third Heaven*: *Inſtantly* thou this way art *above*, though preſently *below* again.

This is far *ſurpaſſing* all the ſenſual and ſinful pleaſures in the world: Theſe ſhort *taſtes*, by giving our worldly *occaſions the ſlip*, and *mounting up to Heaven*. Theſe *ſhort viſits* made there, theſe *ſpiritual* ſhort *applications* made to *Heaven*, to the *bleſſed God*, to Jeſus Chriſt for *communion* with him and the *Father*, have more *ſweet*, *pure*, *powerful*, and *heart elevating* joy, than is poſſible to be had in any carnal or earthly things.

They at the *higheſt*, *brighteſt*, and *ſweeteſt*, have ſomething to *top*, *dim*, and *embitter* them, *Prov.* 14. 13. *Even in*, *&c.* But every *way of godlineſs*, is a *path of pleaſantneſs*, and *ſweetneſs*, which none know but ſuch as try it.

I now have (through Chriſts aſſiſtance) finiſht this laſt way of Meditation, *ſudden* and *ejaculatory*; and ſo the whole *nature* and *ſeveral kinds* of *Meditation*, with ſuch things as are compriſed in it, according to my ſlender ability, and the opportunity I now could have. I am now next to come to the *cogencies* and *ſtrengths* of *Reaſons*, which are for the farther *evidencing* and *ſupporting* of this ſo *important Duty* of *holy Meditation*.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the Grounds and Reaſons of this ſo neceſſary Duty of Meditation.

SO great and neceſſary a *Duty* muſt have its ſupport of *ſtrong Reaſons* to conclude it, and help to bear up the ſpirit better under the weight of it.

Divine and infinite Wiſdom *muſt needs impoſe* and require nothing without great and ſufficient *Reaſons*.

I ſhall therefore endeavour to propoſe ſundry of them in their *clearneſs* and *ſtrength*, as I can in this ſhort intended piece.

The *grounds* and *farther demonſtrations* of this *Meditation*, I ſhall reduce to theſe *four heads*.

1. Firſt from the *natural order and dependencies* of the *Faculties* of the *reaſonable ſoul*; and the *ſeveral principles* of *Grace* given into thoſe *faculties*, to enable the ſoul rightly to exerciſe it ſelf to *godlineſs*.

2. From the *tranſcendent Excellency* of *Divine matters*, which muſt have their *due* and *full mindings*.

3. From the *uſe and ſeveral ends* of *Divine Meditation*.

4. From either the *great accruing advantages*, or the *prejudice* upon the due *performance*, or *ſinful neglect* of this *required Meditation*.

1. *Ground.* From the *natural order* and *dependencies* of the ſouls *faculties*, and the *graces* laid into theſe *faculties*, for enabling a *Chriſtian* rightly to exerciſe

exerciſe *godlineſs.* God as he made man an *excellent creature* for *excellent ends* and *operations*, ſo he hath made the *mind* and *underſtanding* to be the *ſouls eye*, *guide*, and *director*: The *firſt great Wheel*, the *firſt mover*, directing and ſetting the other *faculties* of the *will* and *affections* in going and doing their *ſeveral offices.*

And becauſe mans *nature* is *corrupted* and *diſabled*, of it ſelf alone, to perform things *ſpiritual* and *holy* in a due manner, without a *new heart*, *a new mind*, *will and affections all ſanctified by new principles given in to them*: Therefore he muſt have a *new light* and *knowledge*, *for his natural darkneſs*, *ignorance* and *error*: A new wiſdom, *for his natural folly*: A new power and *goodneſs* of will, *for the natural depravity*: A new *ſtamp* of *order*, power and *life in the affections*, and *holineſs in all the heart*, for the *diſorder* and *unrulineſs.* The order in both *Nature* and *Grace*, is to act from the *purpoſe*, *intention*, and *choice* of the *will*, and *heat* of *affections*: But firſt, the *will* acts from the *underſtanding*, that's the *Golden Candleſtick* which holds the Light, and is *the ſpring* that *brings all motion* about, that *ſets all the wheels of the ſoul on going*: We firſt *muſt ſee*, and have our *guide*, before we *chuſe*, *affect*, or *act.*

The *Will* (as they ſay in *Philoſophy*) is *Potentia cæca*, a *blind faculty.* Therefore the underſtanding muſt *guide* at firſt: Therefore it muſt firſt act by *thinking*, *ſeeing*, and *ſhewing*, what is to be done; in all rational actings, *thinking* muſt be firſt.

And to come nearer to our purpoſe, *in all works* of *wiſdom*, the underſtanding muſt act, not *haſtily*, but *with heed*, not with *precipitation*, but *pondering*: All *heed* and *pondering requires time* for the

minds *bending* it ſelf to a thing, *ſearching* into it, *ſtaying* upon it, by *muſing* and *meditating*: After due *conſideration* comes the *concluſive dictate* of the underſtanding, that this or that is to be done; and before it be done, the *Will* firſt ſpontaneouſly chuſes it, and then *doing* followvs upon *determining*. Novv as things done rationally and rightly, ſhould have, not bare ſudden tranſient *thoughts*, but *ponderings by time taken*; *Prov.* 4. 26. a fit proportion of time: Nothing of moment ſhould be done on a bare *preſent apprehenſion*, unleſs it hath formerly paſſed under the *teſt* of *deliberation*; ſo *wiſe perſons* act ſtill: True it is, vve do many things in *haſtes* and *hurries*; but this is more like *brute creatures* than men: It is the *order God hath ſet in Nature*, firſt of all to conſider, then to act.

All *wiſe doing* is vvith a firſt vveighing: othervviſe it is folly and vanity, vvithout *comlineſs*, vvithout *profit*: As in Nature God hath ſet this order, the mind muſt firſt *move*, and vviſdom in the *mind* vvill firſt *ponder* and *weigh*, not act on ſlight but *precedent* ſerious *thinkings*: So in *Religion*, in all the matters of it vve are to perform, firſt there muſt be *minding*: None muſt ever in *Religion* ſay, *I mind not what I do*: The *underſtanding* in *ſpiritual wiſdom*, muſt *ponder* and *conſider all things to be conſidered*; and the *will* then muſt chuſe, and the *affections* move by the *graces* in them orderly; and then the *executive power* muſt act, in ſubordination to the *mind guiding*, and the *will chuſing* and *intending*.

As the *underſtanding*, *will*, and *affections*, are as the ſeveral natural links of the ſoul; ſo *conſideration* (the ſo noble act of the *underſtanding*) is to

breed

breed and ground the choices and intents of that Queen regent, the Will, and the *orderly motions* of her handmaids, the ſeveral Affections; and then muſt follow proſecuting and doing that was purpoſed by the Will, and ponder'd by the underſtanding.

As conſideration in things Natural, is *fundamental* and neceſſary to due chuſing and doing of all things: ſo *Divine Meditation* is *fundamental* and *neceſſary* in ſome degree to the ſpiritual actings of the Will, movings rightly of the Affections, and a religious regular performing what was piouſly purpoſed, and piouſly firſt ponder'd and Meditated upon.

All the *Graces* that make up the *Golden Chain*; the Graces that are the *ſupernatural ſoul enoblements*, that are planted and reſide in a renewed heart *by way of principle and habit*, are planted and laid into the ſeveral faculties of the Soul, as their *relief* and help, to *ſanctifie* them and *empower them*; ſome in the mind, and others in the will and affections: Theſe faculties have all their ſeveral *Golden Links* of the Chain of Graces aſperſed among them, and laid into them: But as the faculties of the ſoul are all guided, drawn, and moved by the firſt Mover, the underſtanding, and the act of conſidering: So the *graces* of the ſoul, all the *Golden Links* of the whole Chain of Graces muſt move by the firſt Link of the Chain, the light, ſpiritual wiſdom and actings of it by this Divine Meditation. This Link muſt draw firſt: Spiritual wiſdom exerciſed in this holy way of Meditation, muſt be a conſtant *foundation* and riſe to all the Duties of godlineſs.

This ſhould be at *the bottom*, and a ſtill *quickner* to all *prayings*, *readings*, *hearings*, and the reſt; *Nothing is well done, that is not firſt well thought on*, although the Duties of godlineſs are *reciprocally helpful*, mutually lending a hand each to other; as Reading, Hearing, Praying, are to Meditating, and Meditating is to them in different reſpects; yet Meditation ſhould and muſt help to make us our *firm, even footing, and lively walking in* Chriſts ways.

All things from firſt to laſt in our way of Religion, and walking by that Rule, have their due guidance and managings by this *helm* and hand of Meditation.

God every where in Scripture, when he would have thoſe *come right and return*, that have gone wrong, and ſuch to *go on* that have well begun, he calls them to conſideration and minding their ways; *Hag.* 1. 5. *Conſider your own ways in your hearts*; and again, *verſe* 7. *Iſa.* 46. 8. *Bring it to mind. Put your hearts upon your ways*, in the former; here they muſt bring their doings upon their hearts, by conſidering: *Ezek.* 18. 28. *He conſidereth and turneth.* Conſideration is the riſe of returning: *Luke* 15. 17. The Prodigals returning, was upon his conſidering: common wiſdom acting in conſideration, is the ſouls helm; and ſpiritual wiſdom, acting in Meditation, is the Chriſtians Helm; as the Word is his compaſs, and the Gales of the holy Spirit fill his ſails, and make him move. We cannot look for a Ship to ſail well, without the Helms ſteering well; Meditations Helm muſt ſteer our courſe; our courſe to the Harbour of true happineſs, muſt have its riſe in due conſideration, as the Scripture every where ſhews.

O let me, Lord, keep up ever this right order and method in my walkings; let Meditation be the ſpring that carries all the Wheels of my ſpirit right and even; that ſtill pondering all my paths, my ways may be eſtabliſhed.

This then I propound, as a principal ground of the neceſſity of Meditation, that dependance of the Will, Affections, and actings ſpiritual, on the underſtanding ſanctifi'd, and furniſht with light and wiſdom for ſalvation; which wiſdom and light is the guide to, and ſtirrer up of the will, affections, and endeavours by the means of Divine Meditation.

This I have the more now inſiſted on, in that the great failings of all ſorts riſe from neglect of this conſideration and Meditation, becauſe this conſideration is no more conſidered.

All Chriſtians that would have the Will purpoſe, the Affections move, the executing power endeavour well, muſt uſe the grace of ſpiritual wiſdom, that is the firſt wheel in the heavenly frame of ſpirit, and wiſdom by the way of Meditation, to ſet on going all the wheels of other graces diſperſt through the heart: The Graces planted as principles of ſpiritual life, ſtrength, and motion, and given to animate all operation.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the second ground of this so necessary Duty of Meditation.

HEavenly things should have not only a meer seeing and knowing, but a minding and meditating, from their obliging and challenging excellencies (*Prov.* 8. 6. and 22. 20. Excellent things, have I not written to thee excellent things, saith *Solomon*. *Phil.* 3. 8. *For the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, &c.*) their so far transcending excellencies, their rare objective excellencies, give me leave to call them so; that is, they are not only excellent things in themselves, though never known or shewn to us, but they are made to be excellent objects for our observation and minding: All made to be minded; but some of them more peculiarly made and prepared, made great, made high, deep, and large, fil'd brim full, yea running over, with both native excellency, and likewise sutableness for us, sutableness for our spirits to act and make their chief abode of seriousest thoughts upon; for a spiritual and holy eye to fix upon, and be pleased in. As in Philosophy they reason, if there be *objectum sensibile*, an object of the outward sense (and that which especially is excellent) if there be Odours and rich Scents; if sounds, excellent sounds; or if there be rare Colour, Feature, Motion; and that so excellent object Light, especially such glorious Lights as the several Stars, the Moon, and the most glorious Sun; there must be

be those Senses of smelling, hearing, seeing, which may perceive their objects and receive the pleasure and benefit of them, otherwise they must be all in vain. If there were no Creatures with any Senses to perceive these Objects of Colour, Light, and the rest, to what end were any of them?

What use would Colour or Light be of, without any eye to behold it? The omniscient God he cannot need it: The Angels and Spirits being without bodies, they do not need it: Creatures blind, and Creatures made without sense; Elements, as Earth, Water, and the other; Elementaries, such as Stones, Metals, Trees, and such like insensitive things, they need it not; neither need any smells, sounds, or tastes, only the sense is suited to the Object, and the Object to the sense: The Object is made or manifested and shewn for the sense.

So if there be spiritual Objects, and no spiritual eye fitted for them, and if spiritual Objects be held forth and shewn, and there were never any eying of them, they then in that respect (as to their holding forth) would be in vain: And the spiritual eye would be in vain, as if the eye had no Object to behold, it would be in vain, and as no eye at all.

Therefore doth God in Scripture call so oft for a *beholding* of the things of Heaven, because of their excellencies purposely shewn for that end: *Job*—*Behold the Lamb of God.* 1 *Joh.* 3. 1. *Behold what love the, &c.*

Therefore when there are such abundance of spiritual and heavenly things, set out in such rare Colours and proportions, shining in such high splendour and glory: When so many most bright and

beauteous,

beauteous, when ſo great and extenſive rarities and excellencies, beam forth and ſhine ſo gloriouſly in heavenly and ſpiritual things, there then needs muſt be an Eye, a ſpiritual Eye, for theſe ſo excellent Objects, to behold them and be exerciſed about them.

Yea, when there is ſuch a height, depth, latitude, and length, and vaſtneſs every way, of dimenſions of excellency ſhining in them; and this purpoſely, that they may be viewed and admired, and alſo improved; therefore there muſt be an anſwerable eying and conſidering.

1. A real ſincere acting of minding and meditating, to anſwer their moſt real worth.

2. A deep ſearching of thoughts, to anſwer their height and depth of excellency.

3. An abode and dwelling and enlarging of thoughts, to anſwer the latitude and extenſiveneſs of excellency in them, that all their glory and excellency, ſo near as can be, may be known and taſted.

The excellencies therefore of ſpiritual things are for eying and pondering, the greatneſs of their excellencies for great eying and earneſt Meditating.

Therefore we find that great Artiſt in Meditation, the holy Pſalmiſt, ſo buſying his thoughts and meditating in ſeveral things; as about God and his Glory, Greatneſs, Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, Truth, Mercy, Severity, and Power, *Pſal.* 104. *Pſal.* 12. 6. About the Word of God, in thoſe ſhining rays of its infallible Truth, Purity, Perfection, mighty efficacy, and glorious excellencies, *Pſal.* 19. 7, 8. *Pſal.* 119. And ſo about the works and ways of God,

2 *Tim.*

2 *Tim.* 3. 16. The bleſſed Apoſtle *Paul* was ſo acted in his thoughts about the Word of God and the Goſpel, Chriſt and Free Grace, the fullneſs of Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 2. 4, 7. the workings of his Spirit, and the whole myſtery of godlineſs, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. Thus other Saints in Scripture, Prophets, Apoſtles, and divers elſe.

The wiſe hearted will have their eyes thus exerciſed, they think bare knowing, without due Meditating, is an undervaluing of ſpiritual things.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the third Ground of this Meditation, as to ſeveral ends and uſes.

THE third great ground of this neceſſary Duty is from the Ends, and the great concernments of them, as to all ſorts of perſons.

1. *For a ſinners firſt converſion to God.*

1. Meditation is a Duty incumbent on, and highly neceſſary for perſons yet ſtrangers to God, to bring them home; *Ezek.* 18. 28. Becauſe he conſidereth and turneth, 1 *King.* 8. 47. If they bethink themſelves and turn; returning of the ſinners is upon conſidering and ſelf bethinking; thus the Prodigal, *Luke* 15.

No man ever truly converts to God, without ſome conſideration of his Miſery, with his abſolute need of Chriſt and his Grace, and flying to him.

Although the efficacious drawing of a ſinner be

be Gods work, he awakens, convinces, humbles, and he changes the heart; yet not without the ſinners conſidering, minding, mourning, ſeeking, and ſtriving. God converts men as reaſonable Creatures, and converſion is founded on the deepeſt ſet reaſons, and the ſtrongeſt working and prevailing arguments in the world. God he awakens, and the ſinner looks about and conſiders, he reaſons with himſelf, as the Prodigal, and out-reaſons himſelf, but by Gods mighty working, keeping down the hearts corruption; and by its quickning the ſoul with a new living principle, and ſo he reſolves and returns to God: If more would muſe and conſider, did do it duly, more, God enabling, would return.

When the one is to be done, the other ſhall be done, men ſhall come to conſider and ponder.

2. *For all renewed repenting.*

There's great neceſſity of conſideration for our renewing our returning continually; for holding up an evenneſs and conſtancy of renewed repentance. *Pſal.* 119. 59. *I conſidered my ways, and turned my feet to thy Teſtimonies*: Freſh godly ſorrow, ſelf-loathings, ſerious returnings, muſt have new freſh conſiderings of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, and laying loads of aggravations on particular new warpings and miſcarriages. Eſpecially greater Repentings require a deeper and larger foundation in conſideration, as *David* did in *Pſal.* 51. that evidences great and deep thoughts of heart.

3. *For a vigorous acting of Grace.*

For vigorous acting any Grace, Faith, Love, Hope, Fear, Humility, Patience, and others, as is fre-

frequently ſeen in the Saints in Scriptures, what reaſons and perſwaſions, they drew out of the depths of conſiderations; *Job*, *David*, others!

All the heart Graces are ſtirr'd and acted in ſome meaſure by conſideration, either of the command enjoyning, the Promiſe encouraging, threatning awing, examples exciting, arguments in ſome ſort or other inducing and helping.

It is ſomething that works and weighs, is firſt pondered before the ſoul acts, or is rightly moved. A Chriſtian acts not as Water or Fire, which move by their own inclination: But as men act in things as men, which is by choice and free election, but upon preceding inſtigation of Reaſon and conſideration.

Grace, though it be a ſpring of living water, it is not that which runs over of it ſelf: That's for Heaven, where the heart will be full and run alone: It is not like the ſpring-head of *Jordan*, that ran of it ſelf, but like *Jacob*'s well, that had always water, but muſt always be drawn: It muſt be drawn out by conſideration.

Chriſtians miſtake and complain oft of their hearts, and would have them like a running Spring, to run, to act alone: when here in the beſt, though there be water, as in *Jacob*'s Well; yet the well is deep, there muſt be drawing for every drop, or none will come. Therefore to make it come, the Bucket of Conſideration muſt be letting down, and pulling up, and ſo pouring forth. What the Apoſtle ſaid to *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. *Stir up the gift that is in thee*, muſt be ſaid to all, and done by all, that would do any thing.

Some Horſes, we ſay, go on meer Metal, without

out provocation of ſwitch or ſpur; others will go well with ſome ſtirring up: So our hearts, if good, will go on in godlineſs, but not on meer Metal, but with provokings of conſiderations.

There ſhould be endeavoured the beſt and ſtrongeſt mindings and reaſonings, if we would act Graces vigorouſly and ſtrongly. There's a neceſſity that ſtrong purpoſes and reſolutions, for believing, truſting, loving, hoping, all acting, all enduring ſtrongly; be bottom'd in ſtrong mindings and conſiderings: The fuller the conſideration, the better the actings of Graces; the ſtronger the ſpring in the Watch, the better all the Wheels move.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of other ends of this Meditation.

4. FOR all Duties and holy performances, there is great neceſſity of Meditation, in ſome due meaſure, for a due, wiſe, warm, lively, and ſpiritual acting them, acting from the right principle of Grace within, by the right rule eying the Word, and to the right mark and end, ſalvation: Real and vigorous performing in this ſort muſt have ſome good allowance of pondering what we are to perform.

This is very conſpicuous in holy *David*, ſo great a performer of holy Duties, Praying, confeſſing and praiſing; his prayings, and all things in that way, he calls his Meditation. Certainly, thoſe ſo excellent Pſalms of prayings and praiſings were no flaſhes

flashes of a meerly raised phansie, or some hasty runnings over of a hot Brain; not an uttering what came next, but the passages so rare, spiritual, and heavenly, and so strongly rational; as they had a touch from Heaven in the Spirits guidance and assistance, so they had a tincture from a wise holy heart within, laying them asteep in consideration, and acting them with it in highest heeds and mindings, concurring with their utterings. Things so well spoken, must be well weighed, especially when they also were to be Scripture Records. For holy Prophets and Scripture Pen-men were to use their own natural gifts, and their graces, in their writings, though the Spirit of God infallibly guided, sometimes raised and elevated them above themselves: Duties of Religion ebb and flow, are more lively, spiritual, and heavenly, or more dead, carnal, and such as run lower, according to their fomentings and feedings from the warm spring of Meditation; thus in our praying and other duties we may daily experience.

Christians complain they are dead-hearted and cold, slight and perfunctory in performances; confessions are not accompanied with heart-meltings, shame, and self-loathings; Petitions not with fervency, strong cryings, and earnest wrestlings; Thanksgivings not with that flame of love, and joy, and high admirings of the so great goodness, and rich free Grace of God in his ways and dispensations toward us; commonly the cause is, the spring of Meditation is stopt, the soul runs not in such a current of considerations and quickning reasons as it ought, and used to do.

When any part or member of the body fails in heat,

heat, ſenſe, or motion; where there is *actio læſa*, as the Phyſicians ſay, there's *principium læſum*; that is, where is an action or acting hurt or hindred from its natural and uſual way, there the principle and feeder of that action hurt and failing, is hurt and failing it ſelf.

As when failing of ſence or motion in an Hand or Leg, it's num or cannot ſtir; this is from the cold clammy humors lying at, and obſtructing the heads of thoſe Nerves that did convey motive or ſenſitive ſpirits to that part is num or motionleſs. Now,

Meditation is a head or riſe of motions ſpiritual, Reaſons and Arguments are as the Nerves that convey and fetch up heat, ſpirit, and motion into holy performances.

This is one very great cauſe holy Duties are no more lively and warm, the cure muſt be in removing the obſtructions, opening the ſpring-head of Meditation, making that run freſh and full in ſuch conſiderations as may warm and quicken: The wiſdom of Chriſtians therefore is to take as we ſaid, that great Artiſts way, the holy Pſalmiſt, that acted godlineſs ſo eminently, and among others upon this eminent acting ſtill of Meditation, he tells how he prayed day and night, and how he ſtill praiſed and highly rendred his thankſgivings and bleſſings, and he tells you how, he meditated day and night.

And he tells you his Meditation aſſiſted and contributed, as *Pſal.* 5. He tells you his Prayer was his Meditation, becauſe aſſiſted, quickened, and prepared by Meditation: If Chriſtians would uſe to Meditate more carefully and conſtantly, it would help

help to keep up better the vigour of Prayer, ſo would it likewiſe keep life and warmth in all other holy duties.

No Chriſtians are warmer at the heart, and livelier in holy ſervices, than thoſe who meditate moſt; but never expect the one without the other: Keep this Fountain open and ſtill running; this is the water to drive the Mill, the Wind that moves the ſails, the ſpring in the Watch that carries all the Wheels and keeps them going; I ſpeak as to that is to be done on our part, otherwiſe God does all in all.

5. Meditation is neceſſary to be an excluſive and keeper out of evil and vain thoughts, and to diſlodge them; naturally all the imaginations of the heart are evil, and only evil continually, *Gen.* 6. 5.

Vain thoughts lodge and repoſe, as in a Bed, in a carnal heart: *Jer.* 4. 14. *How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? Epheſ.* 4. 17. *Walking in the vanity of your minds:* The way and walk is in the vanity of the mind. To diſlodge theſe lodgers, and ſhut them out, is by accuſtoming and exerciſing the mind to good thoughts, to be the excluders of bad thoughts. The Learned Sir *Francis Bacon* obſerves, as the cures of bodily diſeaſes are by applying things contrary to them, ſo the defects of the mind are helpt by contrary ſtudies: Poetry makes men witty, Hiſtory wiſe, the Mathematicks ſubtil, Natural Philoſophy deep, Moral Philoſophy grave, Logick and Rhetorick able to contend; theſe Arts help the defects of Nature, by working contrary habits proper for the cure of thoſe defects.

So in ſpiritual diſtempers and defects, there are

ſuitable cures and remedies, by applyings and actings of the contraries; So *Rom.* 8. 13. If ye mortifie *the deeds of the body by the ſpirit*: All ſins, particular ſins are mortifi'd by thoſe Graces are contrary to thoſe ſins; ſo diſtruſt is mortified by holy truſting, paſſion and wrath by godly meekneſs, Pride by Humility, worldly affections by heavenly affections ſtill acted, and ſo evil thoughts by good, roving, wandring, and wild imaginations by Godly Conſideration and Meditation: which accuſtoming our ſelves unto, will work off cuſtomary, vain, and wandring thoughts; a holy principle of Meditation, the ſinful principle of evil thinkings.

It is not ſo much the ſtriving and tugging againſt corruptions to keep them down, though we muſt both watch and war againſt them, but the acting of the contrary Grace that beſt relieves us; to ſtrive after a bare ſuppreſſing of ſin and of evil thoughts in particular, comes to little.

This is a kind of being only upon the defenſive; for an obſerving and marking the riſings and ſtirrings of corruption and ſins, it may be with a good meaſure of grief and reluctancy, but this is rather a telling and reckoning the evil thoughts and ſtirrings, and lying expos'd ſtill to freſh aſſaults, leaving corruptions opportunity to return ſo oft as they will, than to abate and ſuppreſs them: It can do little unleſs we go this way to work: The beſt and neareſt way to diſlodge and exclude evil thoughts, is by lodging and acting good thoughts, in this way, this ordinance of Meditation, which will keep us: God keeps us, when we keep his and our way: The way when they come, as we ſhould againſt

against evil thoughts act detestation, but withal act diversion; act not detestation alone, but diversion: Let thy heart both turn inwardly against them, and turn also from them, by turning upon something is both spiritual and seasonable.

So soon as the Poyson of evil thoughts would *infect*, take the *antidote*, the best preservative of diversion to, and acting of good and holy thoughts; the art of diversion is better than meer acting full of striving and opposition.

Yea, Secondly, Meditation is to be exercised, not only as an exclusive of bad thoughts, but for an introductive of good thoughts, good thoughts in a way, for an arriving at habitual heavenly mindedness; for an introductive of heavenly mindedness, where there was formerly a walking in the vanity of the mind: *Gen.* 6. 5. All the *thoughts of the heart vil continually*; customarily, habitually evil: for, I say, an introductive to heavenly mindedness; and likewise for an improver of heavenly mindedness daily.

In handling the Explication of the description of Meditation, when the ends of it were mentioned, among other ends, this was one; Meditation must be performed to be a moulder and framer of habitual heavenly wisdom, making the spirit of a Christian habitually wise; so I adde now, Meditation is to be performed, to introduce, and after that, improve an habitual heavenly mindedness.

It is not only incumbent on thee to shut out evil thoughts, and endeavour good thoughts, to take up the old lodgings of the evil, and so thrust and keep them out, but thou must by Meditation, by constant using it, endeavour habitual heavenly mindedness.

In all truly gracious hearts, a principle that inclines, that introduces a bent and tendency of ſoul *heaven-ward*; but this at the firſt is a tender bud, it is but weak and inclines weakly, acts feebly in compariſon of after time, when it's grown and ſtrengthened by exerciſe; when we exerciſe and uſe to meditate, this dips and dyes the ſpirit into the tincture and Grain Colour of habitual heavenly mindedneſs.

Though the firſt fundamental inclination, and bent of ſpirit heaven-ward, muſt be *ſought* till it be *found*, the *carnal* earthly mindedneſs changed into *heavenly*; yet this, if we were never ſo aſſured of it, muſt not ſatisfie; here no Chriſtian muſt ſet up: But to the now firſt principle and the fundamental habit obtained, this ſuperadded acquired habit, ſhould be this ſecond grand endeavour, and intenſion, firſt to have the ſpiritual habit, the new fundamental heart-tendency, then to have this inclination heightened, ripened, and corroborated, by habit attain'd upon frequencies and conſtancies of practice, and uſing this heavenly meditating. This *David*, the excellent example of actings in this high-way to Heaven, God ſays of him, when he was very young, when *Samuel* came to annoint him, he was one whoſe heart he lookt on as being principled with piety and real holineſs, he had a heart inclined, ſet for God and things heavenly; but he acted holineſs, exerciſed himſelf in it, and in this particular way of Meditation, till it ripened and arrived at habitual meditation, from holding up a conſtancy in it. This may be *gathered* from the character he gives of a godly man, and from his own ſtill practice; *Pſal.* 1. 2. *In the Law of the Lord*

Lord he meditates day and night; when a man *begins to be godly, hath the principle, this will incline him to begin this godlineſs, this meditation*: But then godly wiſdom teaches to practiſe it, for to uſe meditating, to get a hand at this rare work, *to come to an habitual heavenly mindedneſs*: So *David* that was ſo wiſe, ſo excellently wiſe, as *Pſal.* 119. 98, 99. he had acted the fundamental principle, *Pſal.* 119. 112. *He inclined his heart to keep all the Commandments alway*; and *he exerciſed meditation to habitual heavenly mindedneſs*; for he tells us, *Pſal.* 119. 97. *Pſal.* 63. 6. he *meditated all the day, meditated in the night watches*; *when he ſtill awoke he was ever with God.* He gets the *habitual heavenly mindedneſs*, and then it was *eaſie*, and by being found eaſie, it was withal *his delight* Meditation at firſt, the burden and yoke of heavenly Meditation, lying on the weak ſhoulders of the new Convert, with only his *new principle of grace* begun, is a *hard and heavy work*; though the ſpirit be willing, yet to perform it is weak: But when this work is carried on, and daily practiſed, then by *cuſtom* and *habit* (an acquired habit) then it is eaſie, then 'tis the great *ſoul-ſolace* and delight. *David's habitual heavenly mindedneſs, was the rare product and iſſue of his meditation*; he found it ſo, and therefore followed the faſter: Therefore this ought to be a grand *intendment*: A heavenly mindedneſs, *when 'tis habitual*, when it is *corroborated*, and of a young tender *Plant* is grown to be a *Tree* of ſtrength, and yet *is growing more*; this is a *rare excellency*, and *gloriouſly ſweet* attainment; a *heavenly minded man*, how excellent is ſuch a one generally in all mens eyes?

This makes a Chriſtian *ſtill with God, have his way above, his converſation in Heaven, Pſal.* 139. 18. *Phil.* 3. 20. *feed on Manna, fill with peace and joy, overflow and abound in ſingular fruitfulneſs towards others.*

Out of the *abundance* of heart-heavenlineſs the *mouth ſpeaks*, and the *whole converſation* ſhines in an exemplary walking.

Therefore the heart muſt be meditating upon heavenly things, that it ſtill may be *framing and fixing higher* in habitual thinkings. Meditate thy ſelf into *heavenly mindedneſs*, that ſo bleſſed and glorious frame. To conclude this third Reaſon: Therefore the Scripture holds forth Meditation in ſeveral ſorts. 1. Daily doing it in courſe. 2. Then occaſional meditating as a ſuperaddition. 3. And that of ejaculation, or ſhort and more ſudden darting up the thoughts to Heav'n, to come in as an *Auxiliary* & *ſupply*, when the other Meditation, *more ſolemn* and ſet, cannot be uſed; Ejaculations may oft interpoſe in our courſe. This is a *wedge* may be driven in, *enter the throng* and crowd of occaſions; when matters lie before us as *tough and knotty pieces of wood*, when they will not give way to *meditation at large*, but *hinder it*, this wedge may and will ever enter, if we apply it, to *keep up the conſtancy* of heavenly mindedneſs.

Ah how ſhould my ſpirit *bleſs abundantly* that God, who hath ſo *fully provided* for a lying open of the way to Heaven, that my ſoul may mount up thither ſo frequently, *and be either detained above by Contemplation, or at leaſt to touch at Heaven by Ejaculation!*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of the fourth ground that ſupports this Duty of Meditation.

4. THE fourth and laſt ground to ſupport this weighty work of holy Meditation, is the conſideration of the *great advantages* or *diſadvantages*, ariſing from the careful performance, or careleſs neglect of it. Every Ordinance of Chriſt hath holy advantages attending it; thoſe who uſe them aright, daily experience how good it is to walk in the King of Heaven's high-ways.

1. The firſt I ſhall name, is that ſo *glorious advantage* of *improving* our communion and acquaintance with God, *Job.* 22. 21. 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. No communion we *can expect*, much leſs can we improve it, *out of the uſe* of holy Ordinances, whereby we *draw neer* to God, and *God to us*: Although God himſelf be not ſo *tyed to theſe ways*, but he may come to us, when and how he pleaſeth; yet *we are tyed to Gods Ordinances, as our ways of acquaintance with him*; and when in a holy manner we draw neer to God, he hath promiſed to command the bleſſing to us, *Pſal.* 133. 5. *Pſal.* 24. 5. *He ſhall, &c.* Meditation being then his Ordinance, *it is a way of communion*, a ſingular way of acting our ſpirits towards him, of *acting our minds* and *thoughts* in a way of reference to him, either more directly or leſs; ſometimes Meditation is acted on his infinite *excellencies*, in ſeeing his *infinite beauty* and *loveli-*

neſs, *admiring* and *glorifying* him; and by this Contemplation we come to an *improvement* of our knowledge, to underſtand more of him, an *enlargement* of affections, *encouragement* of our wills, chuſings of him, and aimings at his glorifying and exalting; *exciting* and *ſtirring* up the Graces of Faith, for ſtronger recumbencies on his All-ſufficiency, love to cleave more, humility to ſtoop and ſubmit more, patience to endure more willingly, and other Graces to act higher in their ſpheres and ranks; by all in the ways of exerciſing them, to own him and have him more to be our God. Meditation helps *to move and carry the ſoul*, and all that is of it and in it, towards God: And when we act upon him, *open the doors of our hearts to him*, *Rev.* 3. 20. God he comes in and manifeſts himſelf in his Grace, Quicknings, Supportings, Comforts; he ſups with us, as *Rev.* 3. 20. and we ſup with him, he is pleaſed and delighted with our Graces exerciſed towards him, and we ſup with him in his manifeſtations of himſelf to us, in his helpings of us, gladding and chearing our ſpirits, raviſhing our hearts with the taſtes of his love.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

Of ſolace and ſpiritual pleaſure, another end of Meditation.

2. AS it is a way of *ſingular communion* with God, ſo it is for *a heavenly walk*, of great ſoul-ſolace and delight; a *path of pleaſantneſs*, to walk, turn, and recreate thy ſpirit in; as *Solomon*, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, all her ways*; all the particular paths in thoſe ways, and therefore this way; and it is made *purpoſely by Chriſt*, for his people to *walk and turn in*: One of the *ſtately large high walks* in the King of Glories Garden, for thy walk and ſweet refreſhings. *Travelling abroad* to ſee ſundry Countries, Towns, Cities, and the great varieties of Objects there, is counted a rare ſight, a great pleaſure and contentment.

Travelling with the *Eye of Reaſon*, amongſt the great myſteries and *rare ſecrets* of Nature; and by ſearching, curious exquiſite ſearching, to make *new, ſtrange diſcoveries* of Natures *implanted excellencies*; the *makings* and framings ſo admirable, the *properties* and efficacies ſo ſtrange and amazing in ſo many ſorts of things. This travelling in theſe cloſe walks, theſe hidden ways ending in new, rare and uſeful experiences, is a very ſingular pleaſure to many, but peculiarly to *elevated, and refined parts and wits*. But travelling with a *ſpiritual* eye, among ſpiritual, holy, and heavenly Objects,

jects, and to ſee this whole proſpect, take a view of all the *varieties of heavenly beauties and glories*, meeting us in our walk; this is a *raviſhing ſolace* indeed, beyond all others, as far as Diamonds tranſcend the dirt, or the glorious lights of Heaven do clods of Earth or Dunghils.

In *Pſal.* 119. 14, 15, 16. the Pſalmiſt tells what in Meditation-walks he met with, *more ſolace than in all riches*, of which he had ſo great abundance, a Kingdom of his own, and the rich ſpoils of other Kingdoms alſo.

Carnal and ſenſual perſons, ſtudy ſometimes, and act *great curioſity* to *heighten* and *enlarge* pleaſures, and to *find out new, rare pleaſures*, not taſted before: Oft they are at *a loſs*, and diſcompoſed, for a not having ſome new pleaſures, as being *cloyed* with the old. But here is a way for a heavenly ſpirit, of unwearied walking, of *ever taſting larger pleaſures*: Of ever finding *freſh and higher*, more pure, more permanent pleaſures, ſuch pleaſures *that enlarge the heart, and then enlarge themſelves in it*; ſuch pleaſures that come fuller, freſher, ſweeter in, and then there fix and dwell.

Joh. 15. 11. Our Saviour tells us of a *full joy*, and *of a remaining joy*: who can tell you ſuch happy tidings, where elſe *any ſuch joy* is to be both felt and fixt? But in ſuch ways where Jeſus Chriſt, the *water of life*, ſprings forth and flows; the Saints meet with it, drink of it abundantly; *meditate to drink, meditate and drink*: They meditate, and in their walking meet with rare, rich things, ſurpaſſing ſweet: *Pſal.* 104. 34. *David* ſaith his *Meditation of God was ſweet*; certainly it was ſo, and he means *unſpeakably ſweet*; meditation on the word and

and works of God, were abundantly ſweet, *O how ſweet muſt meditation of God himſelf be?*

Meditation *brings in*, and *gives down* ſweeter and more ſurpaſſing pleaſures, than all earthly carnal things can; ſo much beyond them, as *Manna* from Heaven is beyond baſeſt bread, meaneſt fare; *as the Wine of Chriſt's miraculous making, beyond the water it was made of.*

Three things eſpecially *make pleaſures excellent.*

1. When the pleaſurable things are rich and excellent, as *Nature yields* them, as rare fruits, rich ſpices, and the like.

2. When they are rare and excellent, as *Art reduces* them, as *Art meliorates* and perfects them.

3. When they have a *right and curious*, an exquiſite *receiver*, and *perceiver*: As when pureſt Fountain Waters are fetcht freſh, in a pure clean Veſſel, and have a curious Taſter: Or as the richeſt Grape, by the beſt art, is made into Wine, put into the beſt Cask, and hath beſt ordering, and then comes to an exquiſite Palate: Or ſome excellent Fleſh or Fiſh is by the beſt art prepared, and by the exquiſitely right and curious Taſter diſcerned.

1. Meditation it hath thoſe kinds of *Objects*, which in their own Nature are moſt tranſcendent, pureſt Springs and Rivers of Water of life, the things *moſt ſoul-ſatiating*, and unſpeakably delighting; the *moſt glorious God*, the *unſearchable riches* of Chriſt, the *holy Spirit* the great Helper and Comforter, the *pure and perfect Word*, the *precious promiſes*, *heavenly Ordinances*, glorious *Grace*, and *eternal happineſs*. Theſe are in themſelves moſt excellent, and therefore the higheſt ground for our Meditations walk, for ſolace, and pleaſure, and the higheſt.

2. They

2. They have the moſt *excellent means of preparing* and fitting them for a *right taſte*; the Art and skill of the *bleſſed Spirit*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21. *Prov.* 8. 9. by his fitting them, and ordering them to the beſt ſutableneſs for us, both for our minds and hearts, underſtandings to know them, wills and affections to cloſe with them: They are made *plain* and *perſpicuous*, *perſwaſive* and *operative*; they have a *ſuitableneſs conferr'd by an infinite wiſdom* of a God that knows how beſt to deliver them, as he hath done it in the Scriptures.

3. They have the beſt ways of *receiving and perceiving*, namely the higheſt kind of wiſdom, a *rectified and elevated* underſtanding, with a *ſtamp and rare principle* of ſpiritual judgment, 1 *Cor.* 2. 7. and heavenly mindedneſs, diſcerning and ſavouring of ſpiritual things, in allowing and approving of them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 15. *He that is ſpiritual diſcerneth*, *Phil.* 1. 1. *Approve things that are excellent.*

So the Will and Affections they receive, and have the excellent principle of reliſhing, and ſavouring ſpiritual things, in chuſing and complacency, in love and joy: *O how I love thy Law*, *Pſal.* 119. 97. *Thy Teſtimonies are the joy and rejoycing of my heart*, *Pſal.* 119. 111. This is from the principle of Grace, that gives in an *ability of reliſhing* the ſweet and ſavoury things of Heaven.

But when *all theſe concur*, as it is in a *holy heart*, and in reference to it, the pleaſure is *moſt ſurpaſſing*, far beyond others, where the nature of the pleaſures is lower, the preparation lower, and the receiver and faculty of taſting, of either outward or inward ſenſe, or of a meer natural and carnal heart, in its beſt wiſdom and moral excellencies, is far lower.

Medi-

Meditation is the rare way to *ſoul-ſolaces*, and *ſweet-eſt pleaſures*, as *bringing in the moſt excellent delicacies*, and *ſtirring* up the holy heart to act its principles in the Mind, Will, and Affections, of taſting and reliſhing them, and ſo to have let in the ſweet pleaſures and refreſhments of them.

The *rareſt hours*, and *richeſt ſoul Banquets* have been prepared and come to, uſually by this way of Meditation: when the *ſpirit goes up to Heaven by holy Contemplation, Heaven comes down to us by rich Conſolation.* Heavenly comforts *meet us half way, fill us brim full*, and *ſometimes to ſuch runnings over, as we know not how to bear up under the glorious fulneſs of them*: Never doth any *ſenſualiſt* or any *ſinner*, in his way, taſte of ſuch pleaſures; *Prov.*—— *Meddles not with Saints joy.*

It is not *poſſible* that ſenſual and brutiſh pleaſures ſhould be ſuch *as intellectual*; nor intellectual in *meerly ſinful ſpirits*, ſuch as *ſpiritual* and heavenly Meditation, being *a ſpiritual operation acts higher, returns the pureſt, higheſt and moſt raviſhing pleaſures.* Let the Saints Experience give in evidence; and if ſinners try *upon heart changing* and elevating Grace, they then will find, that *no ſenſual*, nor any pleaſures of moſt *raiſed Fancies*, or *higheſt notions* can hold proportion with ſpiritual pleaſures let into the heart, and taſted from this Divine Meditation.

There are many other high advantages I may add; as particularly,

1. As for *brightening* and clearing of knowledge, this was mentioned on a former occaſion.

2. Meditation ſerves for *improving the judgment*; *the moſt judicious Chriſtians are ſuch as meditate moſt:* Perſons of a *ſhort ſpirit*, whoſe thoughts are not

not full length, not well ſized, where thoughts touch as a perfect round thing, on a *perfect plain*; as *lightening* paſſes through the Air, and ſtays no time: Not like the Sun that not only ſhines but ſtays, that ſtaying of his light makes the beſt diſcoveries of things; ſo when things are ſtayed, and have fuller length of time; this is the way to be a judicious Chriſtian, to attain a *ſpirit of judgment*; *the ſhorter you think, the ſhorter will you be of a judiciouſneſs in the things of Heaven.*

3. Meditation *keeps up* and *improves* an awakened and tender conſcience, as bringing in more *plenty of light*, and *acting it more* upon the ſpirit, acting ſtronger reflections, deeper ſearchings, fuller diſcoveries in reſpect of the frame of the ſpirit within, and the converſation without: They that ſtudy themſelves moſt, *will be moſt awakened* to greater ſenſibleneſs, care, and fear, and ſet the ſtrongeſt watches upon their deceitful hearts.

4. Meditation makes a Chriſtian *keep up his activity* and livelineſs; the *beſt actings are bottom'd on the heart, put beſt in frame by raiſed elevated, and moſt ſpiritualized thoughts:* It is greatly conducing to greateſt growth; ſouls if we would have them fat and flouriſhing, *Pſal.* 92. have the Garden of Graces, and the Beds of Spices flouriſh and flow forth, they muſt have as the other helps of heavenly Ordinances, ſo the hand of a conſtant Meditation to water them: he that beſt orders the firſt Wheel, the firſt Mover, will have all the following move more regularly and exactly.

The ſpiritual diſadvantages muſt needs be great where holy Meditation is neglected and never uſed, or but ſeldom, or ſlightly uſed: The advantages

may

may be the rule of judging the diſadvantages; but I ſhall in particular mention ſome of the ſpiritual diſadvantages, and then come to the improvement of all that hath been ſaid.

1. The firſt diſadvantage, and that is a *prejudice* to purpoſe a total neglect of Meditation, or an uſual doing it ſlightly and formally, not ſeriouſly and diligently, is a great and principal ground of mens *abiding* in a ſtate of vanity, a living wholly to *no purpoſe*, but utterly beſides the *grand end* that man was made for, that ſupream end, the infinitely wiſe God, the maker of man, and thereby the *total and abſolute proprietor* in, and owner of his all, and that end of living to God, and glorifying him; vanity, I ſay, in a *wholly miſſing* his end and chief mark: For who can take aim at any mark, that *eyes it not*, or looks not *earneſtly* and *evenly* at it; that either looks quite another way, or looks with a regardleſs eye at the beſt? The bleſſed Apoſtle tells us, he lookt with another eye, *Phil.* 3. 13. with an eye that lookt not off, or lookt eaſily; but the beſt mark had the beſt aim, he lookt for life.

The Scripture calls a ſinner *a vain man*, *Jam.* 2. 20. for his living beſides his main end, ever in every thing *miſſing* that chief end; which riſes from being wanting in aiming right, and that want of aiming is for want of minding. Never can aiming, which is an act of the Will (intending is an act of the Will, aiming is the intending of a mark) never can aiming be right, unleſs conſidering or meditating be right, be due and earneſt, with evenneſs and conſtancy: That heart which comes not to be reduced to minding its chief end, will miſs it utterly at laſt.

The

The reason why there is so much vanity in the best, is partly, yea greatly upon this *little minding*, this slight, uneven, and seldom looking wishly and well at the main mark of God and happiness.

2. *Disadvantage*, sinful security, a *sleepy soul state*, and heart hardning, a sinking and decaying in godliness, is grounded much upon disuse of meditating, especially Meditation of review and self-reflections.

Jer. 8. 6. *No man repented, every one rusheth into his course*: Not considering, bottoms both sinners, and Saints security, and growings worse.

If faln asleep, if falling and in a declining state, awakening and recovery must be by *self-bethinking*, 1 *King.* 9. 47. No wise man but hath need of frequent reviews, and weighings again over and over, of the best of his doings, much more of the Errata, the Errors of them.

3. Givings way to evil and vain thoughts, will follow your neglect of good thoughts.

The mind will be ever busie, if not in good, then in that is evil; giving way to vain thoughts is very dangerous; men by giving way to vain thoughts provoke God to leave them, to give them up to a walking in the vanity of their minds, *Ephes.* 4. 17. and at last as to a customary vanity of mind, God may give them up to judicial dis-relishing, and abhorring holy things, and the thinkings of them, and so perish in them.

O let therefore the good hand of my God, so stay up and act my weak and warping spirit, with the strongest and most efficacious Reasons and inducements, in this so greatly important and necessary, so sweet and blessed an Ordinance, this heavenly meditation,

ditation, that I may ever prove a better Artiſt in it, a better Chriſtian by it!

Having now diſpatcht the reaſons and grounds of this ſo great and neceſſary Duty of *Divine Meditation*, with thoſe things which concern the nature, and ſeveral ways or ſorts of it; I muſt now come to the fourth and laſt propounded particular, namely the right improvement of the Doctrine or aſſertion of the neceſſity on all, to meditate upon *heavenly* and *ſpiritual things*, to exerciſe themſelves in this ſo *concerning*, *advantageous*, and *bleſſed buſineſs*.

CHAP. I.

Of the improvement of the Doctrine of Meditation, by way first of instruction.

THis being so *concerning* a work, and having so strong an influence upon the *whole course of Christianity*; let us now endeavour to *beat out this Gold*, extend it and make it appliable to the state and condition of all sorts of persons, in all the useful ways we can.

1. *Inference.* Then if Meditation on spiritual things, and earthly in a spiritual manner, in such seriousness, searchings, and dwellings of the thoughts upon them, for such high and holy ends, is so needful for all Christians to exercise.

Instruction 1. It serves then to hold forth *a light of instruction* to all that own the Lord Christ, the *Golden Scepter of his Word*, and the obligation laid so indispensibly on them, to see how they are call'd upon to own and observe it, to tread and walk continually in this sweet and pleasant path, this so righteous and good way.

Divers there are who call themselves Christians, and would be counted good, if not so good as any, which yet lead a life of inadvertency, and quite over-

overlooking of it, mind not this Meditation; as if it concern'd them not, as if they were not at all oblig'd, but free from any ſuch *engagement* of their thoughts, any employing of their ſerious thoughts this way.

O how many are there to be found, that never conſidered what that *noble eye* of the underſtanding was given for! they uſe it as if it were made to look *only downward*, or any other way but upward and heavenward; that loſe, contentedly loſe, the principal end of that ſo rare faculty, made moſt peculiarly to mind and contemplate heavenly beauties and excellencies.

What was ſaid by Duke *Alva*, he did not uſe to look up to Heaven, this may be ſaid of too many, yea they may ſay it of themſelves, they do not uſe to look up to Heaven, by meditating on the things above. Ah *ſad eye, and ſad frame of ſpirit*, but *ſaddeſt ſtate*, not to have God, nor the things of God in the thoughts; to have an eye made purpoſely for them above all, but uſes to look from them, not towards them, that fixes on the Earth, that hath their *eyes All*, and Heaven the allowance of *a Nothing*.

2. Others *miſtakingly think* Meditation may concern ſome ſorts of perſons, but not them; they have *no leiſure*, they have *no Learning*, as others have.

We read of a *King*, when a Treatiſe of happineſs was preſented unto him, would not look on it, but ſaid he was *not at leiſure*. O how many are there too like him in this, they are not at leiſure? They can find time for *looking every way*, on every thing *fond phanſie* carries them to, but it is for others

who have time, and a mind to it, thus to employ it in Meditation.

3. Others there are who think *religious ſeriouſneſs* and muſing of things heavenly, the greateſt folly, the *worſt beſtowing* of thoughts and time, they *loath* all trouble of conſideration this way, *licenſe* their thinkings to a *roving ranging liberty*, let their thoughts fly, as Children do their Arrows, any way and every way, but to *no certain mark at all*; with ſuch *any way* is vanity, but *walking* in the vanity of their minds, *Epheſ.* 4. 17. with them no thoughts are ſavoury, but ſuch as are remoteſt from Heaven; a ſerioufneſs and fixing their thoughts is a *fettering* to their *freeneſs of phanſie*; all *ſtay of thoughts* is a meer *tediouſneſs*, and the more ſpiritual the things are they are perſwaded to mind, the more unkind *entertainment* they meet with.

O that ever *that eye*, which the great ſoul-maker beſtows, *purpoſely and principally*, to act its ſerioufneſs and beſt mindings, on beſt things, ſhould be ſo ſtrangely perverted to an only minding the worſt! O what a wonder is it, that the great Giver of this *great Talent* of the *thinking power* doth not totally take it away, doth not let it quite *quench* in a ſeizing ſtupidity, and loſs of reaſons uſe, as it happens to ſome by ſad Diſeaſes; or *that the wildneſs and wickedneſs of phanſie, be not revenged with wildneſs of phrenſie*, and ſtriking all ſuch *willfully mindleſs ſinners* mad, as ſometimes ſome are, and it may be partly on this account!

O let every one *take heed* of provoking their God, in ſuch a ſort, and ſet themſelves to ponder what it is, not only to forget God careleſly, but to *refuſe* to remember him purpoſely and deſignedly; purpoſely

to

refuse minding those things of Heaven, which *are the lights of Heaven*, have purposely the *greatest shine and glory*, that they may have the *greatest eyeings* and lookings upon.

Every one therefore should learn to be concluded under *this great truth*, under the great necessity and *importancy* of this Duty, see it most clearly Christs blessed way, for the frequent and constant *walk of his thoughts*, to improve communion with God, and perfect holiness by.

Lord *clear up my Eye* to see daily more into the excellencies of this heavenly way, and have my spirit lifted up and enlarged in it.

O let me not faint and *grow weary*, but have the loins of my spirit girded with strength, my goings held up in this path of *pleasantness*, unto the end.

CHAP. II.

A second improvement of this truth by way of conviction and for deep humbling.

2. *Use.* LET this serve for *conviction* and deep *humbling* of every one for no better discharging this obedience to the *Lord of our spirits*, and that *thinking power* of them. The natural faculty for thinking was given by God, *chiefly for spiritual objects*, and for acting it self in a *spiritual way*; as the bodily eye is given much more for beholding the light of the Sun, than the light of Candles.

That ſo precious Talent of the *thinking power* was not lent us by our Lord *to embezle* and *ravel* out, but to *employ* and *improve* for his beſt advantage; not to be as *water ſpilt upon the ground*; not to be as a *ſpring* of pure excellent water, which empties it ſelf into ſome *near noiſome ditch*, or is ſwallowed up in ſome Bog or Quagmire; O no, it was given us for excellent ends, to act and be in exerciſe, to put forth its ſtrength and vigour upon things moſt excellent and high in themſelves, and moſt ſweet and ſutable to it.

1. Therefore let every perſon look back and be greatly humbled for thoſe times of *childhood* and *youth*, and that exceſſive vanity of thoughts, and evils, continually evil imaginations, as Scriptures charge all with, *Gen. 6. 5.* O let us learn much to be humbled, for being ſo long under the *total neglect*, and daily excluſion of all *thought-ſeriouſneſs*, not at all complying with, but *diſ-reliſhing*, but *refuſing*, all reducing of the thoughts to any due mindings and ponderings of heavenly things.

In that forecited 6. of *Geneſis*, the Lord when he was threatning the drowning of all the Earth, he ſaw the wickedneſs of man was great, and then among others, when he is making a *review* and looks back *to former times*, the times of mens youth, he caſts, into all, the ſum of ſins; the *youths ſins of thoughts*, the then evils of its imaginations, with the aggravations; reckons not the ways only, and *wildneſs of youth* diſcovering it ſelf to others, but the evil thoughts of youth, and puniſhes for them with other ſins; I ſay drowned the world for youth ſins, yea youngeſt times thoughts.

Though youth be *leaſt conſiderable*, and youths thoughts

thoughts *leaſt of all conſidered*, yet the holy God puts theſe *mites* into the *black bill*, makes the weights of *thought ſins* to help caſt the Ballance, hangs theſe *about the ſinners necks to help drown them in the flood.*

O let us then *look back to them*, be duly humbled for them; humbled for *that All of the evil of imaginations*, humbled that there was then *no conſideration*, nothing of this ſo incumbent Duty, this *then, even in youth*, ſo needful duty: O what a ſad time was that, which did not, *would not meditate*, that could not, *would not ſpare time*; time from pleaſures, play, vanities, and follies; time from very toys, trifles, poor petty deſpicable things, yet ſo eagerly minding them, and being ſo taken with them, enſlaved, led, and befooled by them.

Ah when the holy God *at the great day* before all the world, ſhall bring forth, the *eager mindings of youth*, the toys, vanities; phanſies, and follies of youth, ſet them all in order, and then ſhew what the things of Heaven and happineſs diſcovered and tendered are, all the ſo rare and moſt ineſtimable things proffer'd in the Goſpel together; I ſay, when all the *trifles and vanities of youth*, and the *bendings of the mind* unto them, wholly to them; and all *ſpiritual things* in the Scriptures, in their natures, and heights of excellency, and the not minding, *but refuſing* to mind them, ſhall be laid together; O what will be the unſpeakable ſhame and confuſion, ſilence and ſtoppings of the mouths of *mindleſs ſinners*? O what to ſuch as are *ſnatcht away* in their youth, in the *heights of their minding vanities*, and ſo fond refuſals of meditating on ſpiritual things, *as not being at leiſure yet, as not think-*

ing it proper and ſeaſonable to be ſerious ſo ſoon.

Ah then if the caſe of youth, mindleſs youth, will be ſo ſad at the great day, when things ſhall appear as they are, when an infinitely wiſe and righteous God will make every *ſin appear in its exceeding great ſinfulneſs*; how now ſhould it humble all for their *youth regardleſneſs*, refuſals to allow time for heavenly thoughts; to let precious *youth* be ſo embezled?

If we mind not ſins of youth, God may ſoon make us *to poſſeſs them*, *Job.* 13. 26.

If we are truly humbled for them, this may as it were ſpare God a labour, ſave us that heart-ſmart in troubles and terrors, which like *gravel* in the *tender* eye, or ſmaller motes there, may occaſion great pain.

Thoſe *little things of youth*, and which by many are *reſolved into nothing*, or have a *pardon of courſe*: Ah theſe ſometimes God *blows into the eye of conſcience like clouds of duſt*, that we may feel how great a weight of trouble, how *hot a Hell* the leaſt ſin can bring upon us.

The *leaſt arrow* in the Quiver of Gods wrath, dipt in the leaſt meaſure of its venom, bred by the leaſt ſin, can wound, torment, and drink up our ſpirits; O therefore ſadly ſometimes, let every one look over the time of youth, which ſo long, for intending vanities, *diſ-intended* and conſidered not things ſerious and ſpiritual, but put them by: *Put them by* as meer *niceties* and *impertinencies*, yea as very *burdens* and *yokes*, but chiefly having been called ſo oft upon, by the *Word* without, and the holy *Spirits* ſweet motions, together with the frequent *calls of conſcience* within.

O

O the time of youth may for ever humble all, cauſe us to look on it with *great ſelf-loathing* and *heart-breaking*, with *freſh runnings* of the ſpring of ſorrow and ſhame for our follies and frowardneſs in refuſal of returning, and to cry out with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 25.7. *Lord remember not the ſins of my youth*; O give a free and full pardon for that *fond time* ſo waſted, without conſideration acted upon any ſpiritual concernment, to any purpoſe, but all loſt.

CHAP. III.

Another particular cauſe of humbling, for ſo long neglect of Meditation.

3. *improvement.* FOR humbling greatly every Chriſtian, in that at the beſt and *ſooneſt* we began ſo late this ſeriouſneſs of thoughts, this Duty of Meditation, which challenges of all the very *firſt conſideration* and *pondering*; the very *firſt buddings out*, and firſt bloſſomings of the conſidering power, ſhould begin with our ſpiritual concernments, not letting it act blindly, ignorantly, evilly, and impertinently, but knowingly, wiſely, and in a right manner; the rule allows not taking *the firſt ſtep*, nor *any other* after wrong. Ah how long hath it been, how long have the beſt of Saints, the ſooneſt bloſſoming and ripen'd young Chriſtians, how long was it before *conſideration* and *meditation* began in their hearts, before the Scepter of Jeſus Chriſt, held forth in the Laws and Commands of Medi-

Meditation, was attended, would be yielded to? How long e're that any of our fond and froward ſpirits would ceaſe their vanities and wildneſs, follies and impertinencies of thoughts? When wiſdom in any one begins to act, then conſideration begins; no hopes of young heads, till they begin to put forth and act conſideration, then begin they to be wiſe, or give hopes of a being hereafter wiſe, when they prove conſiderate; then begins that which is wiſdom *for thy ſelf*, when thou comeſt to conſider, when thy ſpirit begins to *beat the Golden path of Meditation.*

Ah then let it humble us, it was ſo long before the firſt and *fundamental Meditation* or Conſideration, before that *firſt engaging* the heart to ſeriouſneſs and a due minding, that *initial* and *introductive* conſidering for true turning to God with the whole heart.

Formerly in one of the grounds of this point we mentioned the *neceſſity* of conſideration, and pondering our unſpeakable miſery by ſin and God's diſpleaſure, in *order to converſion to God.*

As all *that are truly converted are truly humbled*, ſo all truly *humbled* and *converted* are made firſt truly ſerious and ſelf-bethinking, reduced to this Meditation of their *inexpreſſibly* miſerable condition.

Converſion to God ſtands as it were on two feet, comes about by a double inlet, of a twofold Conſideration or Meditation.

1. A ſerious Meditation of now ſeen and felt unſpeakable miſery, that load and burden of ſin and Gods wrath laid on, and this muſt be deep, *ſink* down into the ſoul and preſs it, and *ſoak* through the ſoul, in *ſorrowings*, in *meltings*, in *wea-*

rineſs

tiveſs of ſpirit, and in *willingneſs* to be eaſed of the preſent preſſure.

2. Then a moſt ſerious Meditation and *Pondering of the rich free grace of God* the Father, reconcilable in a full Saviour, offer'd in a free firm Covenant and Promiſe of ſalvation, to every ſinner without exception.

Theſe *two great conſiderations* are the foundations and *inlets* of the *great heart-mutation and converſion*: Therefore theſe are of the greateſt concernment of all other *conſiderations*; yea theſe are ſuch conſiderations, that no other *are to be reckon'd upon*, till they have been performed effectually.

Ah therefore how exceedingly ſhould this humble all perſons whatſoever, for their former ſo long neglect of this *introductive* and *fundamental conſideration*: *Hoſ.* 8. 5. God crys out, *How long will it be e're they attain to innocency*? Ah how long was it with any, with the very *earlieſt ſelf-bethinker*, before he uſed the eye of his mind in conſideration? Conſideration to view, not that was far off, but that was, of all others, the neareſt; to *ſee himſelf*, and himſelf alſo in his *neareſt concern* of all others, that eternal condition of his immortal ſoul.

Ah what an *humbling charge* ſhould this bring up to every ſpirit, to every boſom! O how ſhould it *ſhame* thee and me, and every one, to think how long it was before we began *to do that might be called thinking*, before I *once began* to think to any purpoſe, how long my *thinking and conſidering power* was meerly *abuſed* by me, was both *diverted* and *debaſed* by a continual *running* like Water beſide the Mill, *ravelling* out like a *golden Thread*, ſpoil'd as faſt as ſpun, by a neglect of winding up and right

uſing?

uſing? Ah how ſad and *ſelf-abaſing reflections* ſhould this often occaſion to us? Ah, think we ſadly, how long ſo *noble a faculty* as the underſtanding is, *how rare an acting the acting of its conſideration is*, how high a *concern eternity of* happineſs is! *how neceſſary, in order to happineſs, converſion is*! *and how needful conſideration to converſion is*! And yet to loſe all the right and beſt uſe of this conſidering power, this meditating, by ingaging it in *impertinencies* and very nothings, meer *ſhells and ſhadows*, inſtead of realities and things of worth, true worth and excellency; to be ſo long like the Prodigal before we came to our ſelves, were ſeen *ſitting in our right mind*, entring upon Meditation for that great ſoul-affair, Converſion.

CHAP. IV.

For humbling thoſe that are totally yet to begin Conſideration for Converſion.

AH then in the next place, as it was for great ſhame univerſally to all perſons whatſoever, for ſo long neglecting conſideration, and meditating of their ſouls condition, and for converſion; ſo how far more ſhould it humble all, that never as yet ſo meditated to that great and principal end Converſion, ſo as Converſion followed Conſideration; never had the *firſt corner ſtone laid of that conſideration, which bottoms and grounds converſion*, that hitherto have had all their precious thoughts *ſcatter'd* in

in rovings and wandrings of ſpirit, acted and waſted upon vanities and follies, things that periſh, *that cannot profit in the day of wrath*, that will prove *ſorrow, ſhame, and anguiſh of ſpirit in the latter end.*

Ah how many are there who for improving that *great talent of the thinking power*, employing it for thoſe ſo *high ends* it was peculiarly deſign'd to and given for, for wiſdom to ſalvation, and glorifying God the giver, that have daily all their thoughts either *vile or vain*; that walk in the vanity of their minds, that is, in a conſtancy and *prevalency* of mind-vanity, vanity *excluſive* of good thoughts and all right ſeriouſneſs, and *productive* of nothing but the weeds of evil and vain thinkings! The way of their thoughts is a ſucceſſive taking ſtep after ſtep in vanity, one vain thought follows cloſe, *treads on the heels* of another for haſte; all the walking of that ſo working, active, *buſie mind*, is nothing but continued vanity. O how ſad a frame of ſpirit is this, how ſad a ſign and ſymptom, if not healed by a new frame of heart, ſymptom of *deepeſt danger* of ruine and deſtruction haſtening on apace!

Some Diſeaſes in that ſo noble part the head, are moſt dangerous, the Cure is hard, the Killing quick; when vanity ſeizes the mind, when men from vain thoughts ariſing in them, come to *allowing* of them, and from *allowing* to a *walking* in the vanity of their minds, vanity of thoughts *becomes* an habit, and when it becomes habitual, then the danger is high: All *habits*, evil habits, are like *old rooted Diſeaſes*, hardly, if ever, cured; O when men walk in the vanity of their minds, *God may be provoked* to a giving them up to walk on, and ſo be at laſt

ruin'd

ruin'd utterly for *want* of a timely returning from it.

O how ſhould this awaken ſuch, that have ſo this way *ravel'd out their youth*; it may be, laviſht and loſt their beſt days of riper years, yea peradventure are arrived at *an old age*, and *are old withal in this way of vanity of thoughts*! *Old and vain is ſad to purpoſe*: Ah when younger, when elder, yet never could allow or would *find time* to become ſerious: *A young head*, and *a vain head*, *all wildneſs is a ſad beginning*.

A grown man *ripened* in Reaſon, but not yet beginning, not ſo far as budding out in *conſideration*, not arrived at the *wiſdom* of minding ſoul-concerns, that's worſe, and a ſad ſign.

But for a man to have *gray hairs here and there*, and to be yet to begin *wiſdom* for ſelf, in ſelf-bethinkings, never to have laid the foundation of meditating on the *higheſt ſoul-affairs*, thereby to convert, O this is dreadful, ſad beyond all; ah to ravel out the moſt, the beſt, the *all almoſt* of thy time, and never, never to interpoſe one times, *one hours*, *ſerious Meditation*, or never to *meditate* to purpoſe, ſo as to convert to God truly, but be ſtill to begin to return to God, *contenting* thy ſelf with a *juſt nothing done*, of that greateſt, and which ſhould never be the laſt, but firſt diſpatcht, buſineſs of all others!

Ah, but what will all prove at laſt to all younger or elder, if there be a going on *without conſideration*, without *converſion*? young, and ſtrong, and old, are all liable to death, yea to a death that may be *on thee ſuddenly*; who can (all things conſidered) think in any wiſdom, he can be ſo ſecure, that he

he needs *not yet be ready* for dying? Ah, if that *black Serjeant* of death claps thee ſuddenly on the ſhoulder, ſerves an *Arreſt* upon thee, preſently to come away and give up thy account, in what woful caſe wilt thou then find thy ſelf, what terrour and confuſion will inſtantly ſeize thee?

It will moſt *certainly come*, that thou knoweſt; but when it will come, that thou canſt not know; ah think therefore of it before-hand; make it thy caſe *as now come*, and by the ſymptoms of it had really ſeized thee, that thou wert now *drawing on*, hadſt but a few hours or minutes to continue in this world, and then be caſt upon *eternity*, be caſt upon eternity, and *before thou ever* haſt come to any conſideration which *iſſued in a real converſion*, and thereby to make ſome ſure proviſion for thy eternal ſalvation: Ah put this caſe, this *dying caſe*, *put it ſoon enough*, and *cloſe home* to thy boſom, let it ſtay upon thy heart, let Death as it were *lay his cold hand on thee*, and conceive that thou feeleſt it touch thee, and take *faſt hold of thee* to carry thee inſtantly away, and ſo cut thee off from ever having one *opportunity*, the ſhorteſt ſpace imaginable, for conſideration, any poſſibility of converſion to God more; that time and means muſt now be no longer, *becauſe thou muſt be no longer* in the land of the living.

O but then think, O *ſeriouſly think* what immediately will follow after, ponder thy *particular doom*, thy ſouls ſentencing to an everlaſting ſtate. Think not only of thy ſouls *leaving its old ruined* Tabernacle, but of *its launching forth* into that Ocean of Eternity.

Think what an Eternity *thine Eternity* muſt now be,

be, who waſted all thy time lent thee for Eternity, and that *ſo precious* talent of opportunity truſted with thee, to trade for Eternity, for a moſt happy Eternity, and making that ſure, 1 *Tim.* 6. 2 *Pet.* 1.

And to affect thee more abundantly, and work upon thy ſpirit to purpoſe, think, O think of, beſides thy own particular day, of that *great day* fixt & appointed by the great Governour of all the world, for judging of every perſon, every work of every perſon, the *ſecrets* of that perſons heart, yea every *ſecret thing* good or evil, *Eccl.* 12. Imagine then *that great and terrible day of the Lord to be come, thou ſeeſt the Heavens departing as a ſcrowl, the Elements melting with fervent heat, the Earth with the works therein burnt up*; imagine thou ſeeſt *the Lord Jeſus deſcending from Heaven with his mighty Angels, coming with the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God, ſeeſt the dead ariſing, the living all changed in a moment*, and all perſons whatſoever convented and brought before Jeſus Chriſt the Judge, ſuch a Judge as *never any was*, in any degree to be compared with, ſo *unſpeakably excellent* and glorious, *ſitting on his high Throne*, in higheſt and moſt tranſcendent majeſty and glory, as there cannot poſſibly be greater.

Among all that are to be judged, *imagine thy ſelf there* appearing at the Judgment ſeat to make thy perſonal anſwer, and take thy *Eternal doom*; that preſently thou art call'd, come thou ſinner, come, *hold up thy hand* at the Bar, anſwer for thy ſelf; that thou heareſt the Judge call, read the *indictment*, read it *aloud*, and anſwer thou ſinner to every part of thy charge.

1. Firſt thou that ſtandeſt here at this Bar to be tryed,

tryed, thou *haſt a noble faculty of reaſon*, and underſtanding, and with it *a power of thinking*, and meditating given into thy ſoul, and that, above all others, to meditate of heavenly things; thou anſwereſt, it is true, Lord, I cannot deny it.

2. Thou alſo hadſt *my Word, a perfect rule*, to direct thee, my *Miniſters to perſwade thee, my Spirit to draw thee, thine own conſcience to call upon thee*, which alſo *called loud*, often, and earneſtly upon thee to conſider; yes, Lord, thou anſwereſt, it is moſt true.

3. *Time alſo and opportunity* thou hadſt, ſpace ſufficient allowed thee to meditate and conſider, if thou wouldſt have done it; a *time of youth*, and time enough then, alſo a time of, it may be, *riper years*, and old age; a time of many years, great patience, waitings on, and ſtrivings with: True, Lord, thou anſwereſt, I had many opportunities to conſider.

4. But when thou ſhould have *remembred thy Creator in the days of thy youth*, thou didſt forget him, wouldſt not think of him, of his Word, of his ways, thy own ſtate, and thy ſouls concerns.

Thy *firſt freſh years* were ſpent in *walking in the ſight of thy eyes, and minding* vanities; thou couldſt find time enough to think of thy pleaſures, thy play, ſports, and paſtimes, thy exceſſes, filthineſs, looſeneſs, but not of thy God, or thy ſouls great affairs. At ſuch a *place*, in ſuch a *year*, ſuch a *month*, ſuch a *day* of that month, ſuch an *hour*, or ſuch hours of that day (is it not ſo ſinner?) there & then thou wert *thinking*, *muſing*, *deviſing* for ſuch a *pleaſure*, ſuch a *ſport*, ſuch a *vanity*, and ſuch a *wickedneſs*; and the *following* day, at ſuch a place, and ſuch an hour, do-

ing the like; and ſo day after day thy *thoughts* were laviſht, loſt, *let out* on impertinencies and meer vanities, but *purpoſely* taken and turn'd from all religious ſeriouſneſs, all ſoul-matters: Was not this thy uſual way to ravel out that thy youths time in *never minding* thy God, and the things are holy; *never to conſider* any thing to any purpoſe indeed? What ſay'ſt thou, ſinner, to all this charge of *embezling* that precious time of tender and more pliable youth? Are not all particulars charged againſt thee true? Yes, Lord Jeſus, I was ſuch a one, as to every particular, and cannot deny any thing charged.

5. Ah, but beyond that time, *thou livedſt up to riper years*, and when the time of *fond phanſie and folly wore off* by the *ripening* of reaſon, on thy coming to mans eſtate, then had you more reaſon far, more to mind and meditate on the great concernments of God and your ſoul; *I then lookt for ſeriouſneſs*, when you now could be ſerious, and ſerious enough in *things* of lower concernment, as for *your calling and buſineſs*, for *getting wealth*, and *growing rich*, to be *great and high*, and have abundance; ah, how couldſt thou *ſtuddy*, *muſe*, beat thy Brains, in the day, and in the night appointed for reſt and ſleep, how did thy worldly mindedneſs act thee? thy *mind running*, *thoughts intending*, multiplying, with all poſſible earneſtneſs, and eagerneſs? Ah, friend, what have been the multitudes of thy muſings, day after day, in ſuch and ſuch caſes, buſineſs, bargains, purchaſes, and projects? What an engroſſer of thoughts hath *Mammon* been in thy covetous frame of heart, and what a moſt ſhameful excluder of good and heavenly thoughts con-

continually? Yea, I have to charge thee farther, *before men and Angels*, with thy *ſtudyings* and contrivances, the deepeſt and moſt intenſe thoughts of heart thou haſt had, for *credit*, *applauſe*, and *honour*, from men like thy ſelf; for riſing, growing high, getting power, and being great in the world; O how this, this, friend, provokt and engag'd your thoughts, ſtudyings, plottings, all the *ſoul-earneſtneſs* that was in thee, to be accounted and applauded, to be great and high? but you never would be half ſo ſerious, ſpend any ſuch proportion of time to get *Honour that comes from God*, and to be one the Lord commends.

Sinner, is not all this alſo true? canſt thou deny any one part of this charge?

No, Lord, ſaith the Priſoner, it is all very true.

Over and above, thou haſt meditated and deviſed, and that many and divers ways, for *ſatisfying thy luſts in every way thou likedſt*, and wert pleaſed in: Meditated for *miſchief*, taking revenge, which was none of thine, but mine, as now appears; yea, for *oppoſing good cauſes*, *perſecuting the godly*, ſuch as would be upright in their Generation, and not be wrapt up in the wickedneſs of the times.

Ah what, of all others, what depths and heights of muſings and deviſings hath thy heart of hatred, thy *keeneſt helliſh* malice brooded and brought forth againſt my Saints, theſe Saints that lived with thee, here *they are before thee*, ſee them; *there's ſuch a godly painful Miniſter*, and there's *another*, and there *are all the reſt you hated and oppoſed*; here, friend, *are ſuch Chriſtians* you have *plotted againſt*, and *perſecuted ſo often*; there's *ſuch* that lived in *ſuch*

places about you, there's ſuch *who lived in the ſame Town with you*, here's one that lived *the very next door* to you, here be thoſe who were in *the ſame Family*, of your *familiarity*, of your daily converſe with, and your *ſpiteful oppoſition* to; here's ſuch a fellow-ſervant, ſuch a Brother, or Siſter, ſuch a Child or Parent, ſuch a Husband or Wife, hated and ſcorned for godlineſs ſake: This, this hath been *thy manner ſinner*, from thy very firſt to the end of thy days, which have not been few; all the thoughts of thy heart evil, all but *ſteps* in the *long walk* of the vanity of thy mind.

Thoughts thou *haſt enough*, thy mind that meditated enough, was ever acting; *buſie enough, but bad*, thou wouldſt not meditate the *right way*, on the beſt things, on holy and ſpiritual things, not in all thy time, ſo as to convert and turn to God. What ſay'ſt thou, wretched ſinner, is not this charge, all this indictment, in every particular true, witneſſed and proved to thy face? Do not I, the *heart-knowing* Judge, know it is every tittle true? and doth not *thy own* heart, thy own boſom, the *Book of thy conſcience*, ſhew it to be true, cannot but yield it ſo? Ah true, *true it is, Lord*, all in every tittle moſt true, I cannot deny it, nor will contend to juſtifie or excuſe my ſelf in the leaſt.

7. Then ſinner thou acknowledgeſt thy ſelf, by all that hath been ſhewn and proved to thy face, and by thy own confeſſion of all, that thou art guilty; what ſayſt thou therefore to the whole charge? Guilty, or not Guilty? Guilty, guilty, Lord. What haſt thou then *to alleage*, why ſentence of condemnation ſhould not paſs upon thee? Ah, *Mercy, mercy, Lord*, I beg mercy, I have only mercy

mercy to entreat; *O pity, pity,* mercy I moſt humbly crave. *No, no,* it is now no time for mercy, for any pity, time was when thou livedſt under the free *tenor* of it; but now time's paſt, now go thou *curſed wretch,* that wouldſt never conſider, *never meditate*; go thou fooliſh ſinner, thou *lazy ſlothful ſinner,* that wouldſt not take the pains, and diſ-eaſe thy ſelf ſo far, as to engage in a little *thought-labour*; go thou ſtubborn ſtout-hearted ſinner, that wouldſt not ſtoop to take up this eaſie yoke, this *light burden,* of being ſometimes *rightly ſerious,* of a *now and then* ſome few minutes time meditating and pondering matters ſpiritual and eternal; but only worldly, carnal, and periſhing matters, theſe, theſe were the things had all thy *mindings,* all thy *ſeriouſneſs* and *earneſtneſs,* and thy *conſtancies* of thoughts; go therefore *thou fooliſh, lazy, ſtubborn* ſinner into *that place,* which is prepared for all ſuch as thou art; *Take him away,* bind him *hand and foot,* caſt him into *utter darkneſs.*

Moſt *juſt, juſt* and righteous is it, Lord, *cry all the* Bench of Saints and Angels; *full evidence,* and his own confeſſion there is, that he would not obey this righteous Law, would not uſe his thinking power, to think of thee, Lord Jeſus, nor the things of thy Kingdom; nay he would not *bethink* himſelf, *think of his immortal ſouls* higheſt concerns, but minded wholly other things than the main: O 'tis moſt righteous, righteous Lord, that thou haſt judged thus.

When the ſentence is thus pronounced by the mouth of *Jeſus Chriſt* the Judge; when all that *innumerable company* of Saints and Angels have unanimouſly (not one diſſenting) approved the righteouſ-

neſs of the whole proceeding, and juſt doom and ſentence; what then preſently follows, but *driving away* from the face of Chriſt, *dragging* and *haling* to the place of Execution, *thruſting* into the pit of darkneſs, a filling up with ſcalding wrath brim full, and a ſealing up, in that woful place and ſtate, for ever and for ever?

Ah, then *thou that art and haſt never, never* been ſerious in minding the main concerns of thy immortal ſoul, ſerious *in every thing rather* than therein: O look, look to it before it be too late.

Ah, never be quiet, till thy ſpirit comes to this *happy attainment*, comes to fix and ſetle in ſerioufneſs of daily meditating, in walking this way with evenneſs and conſtancy, and ſo make it eaſie and ſweet. Ah never be content, till from *mindleſneſs and diſuſe* of thinking thy thoughts the right way, acting the ſerioufneſs of them upon things that challenge it moſt, *till thou comeſt to thy ſelf*, as *Luke* 15. 17. comeſt to humble thy ſelf greatly, to ſay with deepeſt ſorrow, ſelf-abhorring and ſhame, *O what have I done?* what have I been? how many years have I run out, void of all due conſideration? how many and many *millions* of ſteps have I taken in the great Road of *vanity of thoughts*? Ah how near am I come to the end of my days, or *how near may my end*, for ought I know, be, and ſo for want of thinking aud meditating, I may periſh for ever? Ah at how *low a rate* have I ſet my precious ſoul, ſet *my body*, my *whole perſon*, my *hopes*, my *God*, his *Chriſt*, his *Spirit*, his *Grace*, *Heaven*, *happineſs*, & all my high concerns, *that never thought them worth a thought*, or a *few thoughts* in this way, this holy way of Meditation? never *weighed* them ſo in the Ballance,

unleſs

unleſs to find them *too light*, *outweighed* by every worldly, every bodily and carnal concern? O unwiſe, ſilly wretch, that I have all this time been, that I ſhould deal thus by my ſelf, be ſo cruel and ſo heedleſs, the *fooliſheſt* adventurer, the *moſt idle* ſluggard, to live in a *lothneſs* to be at the pains of a ſometimes meditating and thinking, though the gains be, or might be, beyond all thoughts.

Ah, now therefore, now, now, if it be not *too late*, by the Lords help, I will begin to *bethink* my ſelf, now I will ſet my ſelf to do my utmoſt, now to make haſte, and uſe all the means I poſſibly can to repent and reform, that I may be recover'd from my vanity of mind and converſation, and at laſt be wiſe unto ſalvation.

CHAP. V.

Of being humbled for negligence in this Duty of Meditation, after experiencing the fruit and ſweetneſs of it.

ANother improvement of this Doctrine is for *due humbling* of all ſuch who after experiencing the ſucceſs and ſweetneſs of heavenly Meditation, both that firſt ſoul-ſerioufneſs, into which they were drawn, drawn by the Holy Spirit in effectual vocation, and grounding their ſo happy converſion to God, and believing in Chriſt; and then likewiſe *after their uſual* and daily exerciſing holy Meditation, that whence they have had ſo ſweet Communion with God, thoſe *rare hours* wherein

they have been wrapt up, with that bleſſed Apoſtle, into the third Heaven, and taſted of thoſe glorious and ſoul-raviſhing pleaſures and joys that are unſpeakable.

Ah Chriſtian, to *experience ſo often* the ſurpaſſing ſweetneſs of this happy way, this path and walk to Heaven, and *tread it no more.*

1. To fail ſo frequently in that ſo needful daily Meditation, do it ſo little or ſo ſlenderly.

2. To take *ſo ſeldom* into that path of *Occaſional ſet* and *ſolemn* Meditation, that alſo of *ſo great* advantage, *large incomes* of light and wiſdom, warmth and quickening, ſtrength and encouragings.

3. And to act no oftner that ſo *eaſie*, *quick*, and expedite *ejaculatory meditating*, whereby thy ſoul may give incumbrances and overcharging buſineſs *the ſlip*, take breath, eaſe it ſelf, mount up to Heaven, *make a ſhort viſit*, and return refreſht, quickened, and enlarged.

A Student never does himſelf *ſuch wrong*, as when he reads much and muſes little, for then he either *receives* in, or retains nothing, or cannot *manage* his Notions: *We never order and diſpatch Affairs worſe than when we Meditate leaſt.*

And ſo a Chriſtian never loſes more labour, does his *ſoul-affairs worſe*, than when he *muſes not*, and *warms* not himſelf by this exerciſe of Meditation. Divers profeſs a faculty and ability, as in Sciences and ways of Learning, in Myſteries and ways of Trading and Dealing, yet are but *ſlender proficients*, can do little but bungle, becauſe they *ſtudy and muſe no more* to know their own way.

Many Chriſtians are *but bunglers*, to what they might

might be, make a *large diſproportion* between *their profeſſion* and *their proficiency*, their *practice* and their *profit*, becauſe they meditate no more to underſtand their way.

2. The great, not only ignorance, but deadheartedneſs and ſpiritual chilneſs, with the brokenneſs and unevenneſs of Chriſtians in their walkings, ariſes much from a negligence in this Meditation; either negligence of *not doing it*, but ceaſing ſometimes; or negligence of *ſlackneſs* and *ſlothfulneſs* in ceaſing fervency and *induſtry* for the manner. *Davids manner of meditation, in the fervency and the conſtancy of it, will keep up Davids affections fervent and flaming affections; and Davids conſtancy and evenneſs of converſation.*

3. Little meditating makes *lean Chriſtians*, of little life, little ſtrength, little growth, and of little uſefulneſs to others. *Heb.* 12. 12. There's mention of *feeble knees*, which alſo occaſions the going with no ſteadineſs, and the not *making of ſtraight ſteps.*

As it is oft in the body thus, from a failing in the head, obſtructions of the Fountain, and feeder *of ſenſe and motion*; ſo this among others, *this failing* in Meditation, is a great occaſion (though there be divers other cauſes) a great ground of Chriſtians *weak feet*, and *going no ſtronger and ſteadier*: Meditation that ſhould influence, ſtir up ſtrength and motion, is obſtructed, diſuſed, and neglected; Meditation *muſt ſtill* lend a hand of help to every ſpiritual undertaking, *firſt ponder, then proceed*: We can perform nothing well in worldly affairs, without well conſidering; ſo in ſpiritual matters, what duties can be well performed, what graces rightly exerciſed,

exerciſed, what in all Religion that can be named, can be rightly ordered, if you mind not ſeriouſly, conſider not before the doing it, as well as mind and attend it in the doing?

Serious thinking is *fundamental* to all right doing; O what are the innumerable advantages that thy conſtancy in this courſe would ſtill bring in? and what have been thy loſſes by neglect, and will daily increaſe upon thee by it? Ah therefore conſider, *be awakened* and ſtrive to be humbled for all thy failings and neglects; *eſpecially thy falings off from*, and diſuſings of this ſo neceſſary and excellent Duty; look to thy *firſt* beginning in it, and thy making no better entrance into it.

Firſt undertakings, if not ſo well and through, prove great inconveniences, and if not lookt after and amended, may occaſion a *leſs ſeriouſneſs and care ever after*; but however they require a *making up* and bettering: that which ſerves *a young, weak*, and unexperienced Chriſtian, *muſt not ſerve* a grown Chriſtian, one old in his way.

O but be humbled for thy *improving no more* in this *Art of Meditation*, for being no better Artiſt, for having ſo little of this *heavenly habit*, and heart-readineſs, from thy frequencies and conſtancies of not only acting, but *earneſt and vigorous ſtrivings*, which intend and ſtrengthen, improve and increaſe the habit.

Be humbled for no *higher attainments* in this happy way, which we ſhould be moſt perfect in & ready for; in which we ſhould ſtill have an increaſing and heightening *complacency* and pleaſure to perform, with a ſtriving to do it better, as to *heart-readineſs*, better as to *heart-power*, and *purpoſe*, re-

reſolvedneſs againſt oppoſitions and hindrances.

Ah then look, *mournfully look we*, and with *ſhame* and ſelf-abaſings, on all and for all our failings, and for all our guilt contracted for this Duty neglected.

1. That our *progreſs and improvement* hath been ſo ſmall.

2. Our *inequalities* and unevenneſſes ſo many.

3. Our *fallings off* and deſiſtings, and lyings ſo long, or any ſpace of time, before returning and recovering, and *by our diſ-uſing*, contracting an unwillingneſs, a *ſpiritual lothneſs*, a doing with more difficulty, or by *refuſals* and denying of doing this Duty, to thereby aggravate our ſin.

Therefore, I ſay, for all theſe admitted and added, let us be *deeply humbled* before God, and mourn over ſo many and great neglects he hath obſerved in us.

Ah therefore ſay, *I have ſinned greatly in what I have done*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. ſay, *I will do ſo no more*, *Job.* 34. 32. Ah, ſo to *ſlight*, to forget the concerns of God and my ſoul, to let my *eyes be in the corners of the earth*, to let my ſoul loſe ſo its lookings, by eying vanity; to *imbezel my precious thoughts* upon the *by*, and overlook the *main*.

May not my God come and challenge me for great *unkindneſs*, unworthineſs, and folly? What, *thou my child* to be ſo vain and unwiſe? when thou haſt to contemplate *thy God*, in his infinite *all-ſufficiency*; *thy Saviour*, in all his matchleſs beauty and fullneſs; *thy Sanctifier*, in all his operations and conſolations; *thy perfect rule*, the Scriptures, with all the treaſures of heavenly truths in them; and when thou haſt *all the excellent* and admired works and ways

ways of a God, *the condition of his Church* and people, *thy own ſouls ſtate*, and eternal ſalvation, together with all ſuch things that continually ſtand full in thy view.

Ah, to have *ſo many paths* for the feet of thy ſpirit to walk in by Meditation, ſo many rare Objects, for thy *Eyes entertainment* and employment, and to thy *ſweeteſt ſolace*, *largeſt ſatisfaction*, and yet in any degree, to miſcarry the *golden ſeaſons* of this ſo *heart-enriching* Meditation.

Ah may not my *grieved God*, and his *grieved ſpirit*, grieve and ſadden my herein ſo *ſinning ſpirit*? may not my neglects of Meditation, not ſeriouſly and frequently thinking of him, and ſuch things that nearly, highly concern him, juſtly occaſion *my Gods neglecting of me*? Neglecting me, *by withdrawing* his hand from his bleſſed impulſes, infuſings of heavenly thoughts, judging it not meet *to give down good and holy thoughts*, into a ſpirit diſtemper'd, diverted, by too uſual admittance of earthly, evil, and carnal thoughts, and *diſuſe* of holy Meditation.

Who will plant the *moſt precious flowers* among heaps of poiſonous weeds?

Who will mix their *richeſt*, *pureſt Wine*, with puddle, dirty Water, or their *Gold and Diamonds* among dirt and dung?

Ah, this is the way for my God not only to withdraw himſelf, but to let Satan the foul Spirit looſe upon me, to trouble me, to haunt me, to follow me, with *all manner of diſquieting* and diſcouraging thoughts, with temptations of *injury* and ſtealing, *revenge* and cruelty, *uncleanneſs* and *filthineſs*, and *ſinful ſenſualities*, and ſuch like evil thoughts againſt others. Ah,

Ah, may not this neglect of *good thoughts* and due Meditation, be juſtly met with, and expoſe me to the *blackeſt* and *moſt horrid* thoughts and temptations, ſuch as thoſe of *Blaſphemy*, *thoughts as thick as Hail*, and that daily haunt me, *darting horrour* and *Hell* into my ſpirit, making my heart to *tremble*, and my *hair* to ſtand upright on my head?

Ah, may I not (if I amend not the ſooner) not come to that ſo ſad and dreadful temptation, ſo contrary to Nature, *the temptation of ſelf-deſtroying*, thinking it may be beſt to be rid of my trouble, though it be ſo *horrid and unnatural*, and will render the caſe ſo dangerous and dubious?

Yea, may I not have *ſelf let looſe upon ſelf*, my *own heart* to *worry it ſelf*; my *boſom* opened, the *Book* of my conſcience *held open* before me, and my *eye held* to a looking continually into it, ſeeing my ſins *ſet all in order* before me, making me a *magor miſſabib*, *fear round about*, *a terrour to my ſelf*?

And to all, may not my God *plunge me* into the *depths of diſſertion*, ſet himſelf againſt me, let all his *waves paſs over me*, let me ſee and feel nothing but his *wrath* and *Hell*; that I who would not meditate as I ſhould, ſhall now nothing but meditate as I would not, *meditate nothing but terrour*?

O therefore to prevent all this, or whatſoever may befall me on careleſneſs and neglect, O let me call to mind my former times, my former taſtes and ſweet ſolaces, had in my *walking up this hill of Meditation*; thoſe *rare hours*, *ſweet enlargements*, *ſtrong conſolations*, *happy and encouraging experiences* I had when I *kept up my vigour and conſtancy*, as in others, ſo in this *bleſſed way* and exer-

ciſe

ciſe of holy Meditation; and being greatly humbled, let me keep cloſer to, and walk with an evener foot in this heavenly path.

CHAP. VI.

A perſwaſion to all ſuch who never accuſtomed themſelves to this work of Meditation.

IF Meditation be *ſo neceſſary* a Duty, let this then *prevail* with every one that hitherto hath done nothing in it as yet, or that which hath been to no purpoſe. O that this ſin can be laid to *thy ſouls charge*, that yet thou art to begin to meditate of the great things of thy God, and thy own ſoul. That thou ſhouldeſt have *ſo rare a power* in thy ſoul, of thinking and meditating, a power alſo that is ſo *active* and *buſie continually*, and yet never employed aright; ſo *great a Talent* entruſted for uſe, and either *hid up* in a Napkin, or waſted and *ravelled out* in vanities, impertinencies, and wickedneſs.

1. Seriouſly, I beſeech thee, conſider, thou canſt be no *good Chriſtian*, no *truly godly perſon* (whatſoever thou or others think of thee) that haſt been, and art no complier, but a refuſer in this particular. Ah, this ſtrikes thee home to the heart, daſhes quite thy confidence and hopes, grounded on thy calling thy ſelf a Chriſtian.

That clear paſſage *proves it undeniably*, *Pſal.* 1. 2. *The bleſſed man meditates in the Law of God day and night*: The leaſt that this place can hold forth, muſt be

be a *doing this duty in a course and way*; he that is a bleſſed man, is not only one that pretends to Religion, but practiſeth and *uſes Meditation*, hath an *inward delight in the Law of God, and from delight in it, meditates on it*, in a conſtancy and ordinarineſs; not *acts a now and then bare thinking*, when others mention it, Miniſters preach on it, or in the reading of it; to *think of it then* when it cannot *well be avoided*; but a ſerious and purpoſely meditating, a keeping up a *conſcientious* and complacent conſtancy in it.

If therefore *continual Meditation* of the Law of God, his Word, and the Excellencies in it, be the character of a godly perſon, *think well of it* and thy own condition; *flatter not thy ſelf* with that kind of falſe godlineſs, which *falls ſhort* of the true character *of true bleſſedneſs*.

2. Conſider thou canſt be no *true ſubject of Jeſus Chriſt*, that doeſt not ſubmit to this *Law of Chriſt*, this *Meditation*: It is in Scripture made one of the *imperial Laws* of the King of the Church, who gives every ſubject of his this charge, lays this command *indiſpenſibly*, and *repeats* it frequently, *records* the examples of the Saints, who practiſed it diligently, as *David* and others; therefore thou diſowneſt this Law, thou diſowneſt the Law-giver Chriſt, and ſo he takes it.

3. Ah then *what is it that reigns* in thy heart, that *ſits* in the throne and ſways, but the Tyrant ſin, *ſin that hath dominion over thee*, ſin that is the great *obſtruction* and hinders thee, ſin that is the great *Biaſs of diverſion* that draws thee quite another way?

1. It is meerly *the vanity* of thy mind, in which thou

thou walkeſt, that keeps thee from walking this way.

2. It is thy *ſinful folly*; the *wiſe* in heart will muſe and conſider, and *moſt conſider* things of the moſt concernment; what is it which hath made all the *ſpiritual fools*, but ſin? The *Scripture fool* is the ſinner, and wherein is the folly ſeen more, than in *not conſidering* things moſt conſiderable?

3. Thy not meditating, it is from the *tydes and currents* of unmortified luſts; luſts in dominion and reign, luſts that *ingroſs* thy thinkings, luſts that *engage* and ſet thy thoughts on work, and intend them.

In every *predominant luſt* there is a predominant *ſcope* and tendency, an *end and aim* that gives the rules and laws; as therefore the luſts aim lies, ſo all the thoughts and ſerioufneſs are levell'd; as the luſt-aims and marks are, ſo are the mindings: If luſts of ſenſuality, riot, drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, and voluptuouſneſs; if theſe or any of theſe be predominant, all the ſtrength of the mind and its muſings run out at that leak, that paſſage.

If *covetouſneſs* and worldly mindedneſs be predominant, all the ſtudyings and thinkings run down, and are carried away by that outlet.

If *pride*, *vain-glory*, and affectation of honour bear ſway, then the *thoughts and contrivances* act up all that way, climb up that Hill.

Thy *ſerving luſts and pleaſures*, being inſlaved by them, is the ground of thy thoughts ſubſerviency to them; they ſet up *an excluſive* of good thoughts, ſhut the door againſt all godly ſerioufneſs, turn the Engine of the thinking power into an *inſtrument* and forge, for themſelves to act a ſinful ſerioufneſs,

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to farther only the ſatisfying of them.

I have *read in Pliny*, that the Romans attempting a diſcovery of ſome more unknown places of *Africa*, could not *proceed* and ſucceed in it by reaſon of the innumerable ſorts *of Serpents and poyſonous creatures*, which filled the Country. Thy heart is like that Country, full of dangerous luſts, which overrun it; there is the true reaſon why thou wilt not, canſt not meditate, becauſe the predominant luſts in it engroſs and enſlave the whole thinking power, luſts rule thy lookings, thy hearts ſinfulneſs hath ſeiſed thy ſeriouſneſs, *ſweeps all thoughts in to it ſelf and ſervice.* One luſt *ſhares now one proportion of thoughts*, another luſt goes away *with another part*, and ſo among them all, who take *their turns in thy heart*, they gather up, and *appropriate all thy ſeriouſneſs* and *vigour of thoughts*, all that are to any purpoſe; all other *thinkings* are ſo ſhort, ſlight, ſeldom acted in compariſon, that they amount to nothing, millions of them make no more than motes in the Sun would contribute to make a Mountain, becauſe there's commonly nothing of ſeriouſneſs in them; when they are acted toward things ſpiritual, they are but ſmoke or chaff that flies away: And conſider why luſts have thy thoughts ſo enſlaved to them, it is becauſe luſts and ſin have that Empreſs of thy heart, thy love; for as thy love is, ſo are thy thinkings; thou pretendeſt thou loveſt God, and with all thy heart, but 'tis no ſuch thing; that which hath the *love moſt*, hath the *eye moſt*, *Ubi amor, ibi oculus*, as the common ſaying is; who ever could truly ſay *they loved any perſon moſt*, and thought of *that perſon leaſt*, but of *other things every day and hour more?*

O consider this well, how *evil it is* thou meditatest not by reason of thy *reigning corruptions* and lusts that will not let thee meditate; and lusts *have thy thoughts* from *having thy love.*

4. Why as to thy own frame of spirit is there a neglect of this holy Duty? it is from *sin reigning* in the relishing part, the palate of thy soul; sin that *takes away thy taste*, and makes godliness unsavoury: *Those that are after the flesh, savour the things of the flesh, Rom.* 8. 5. Ah, not to meditate from such a *sad cause*, from a *not savouring* the things of God! finding no sutableness, no sweetness, no pleasantness in spiritual things! none in the Word and ways of God, in the precious promises, heavenly graces, glorious priviledges, given to the Children of God! none in an infinitely sweet and blessed God, Father, Son, and Spirit! none in the things above, but all in the things below, not because they have no savour or sweetness in them, but because thy carnal heart *hath no principle of savouring of them*!

5. Nay is it not from sin that lodges and breeds in thy bosom a hellish enmity against any thing is holy? *Rom.* 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity to God*, and so against every thing that comes from God. Ah but sinner, this is the *blackest thing* in thine or any bosom, this is the *loathsomest thing* in all the world, 'tis the *chief feature* and lineament in the *face of Satan*, the most *abominable part* of Satans heart, and the very worst thing in all Hell; nothing is, or will be *more evil in Hell*, than their *enmity*, boiling up, and running over continually against God.

6. But who is he that hath *unhinged thy heart*, in respect of this Duty of Meditation, that acts thee to this awkness, and bars the door against it? is it not

not *Satan* that dwells and rules within? Satan that is thy ſouls *implacable* Enemy, and the great adverſary to this Meditation? And what is his reaſon of hindering thee, his grand reaſon, but that he knows this to be the way of *coming* to a mans ſelf, and converting to God?

Of all ſuch things that are *diſpoſitive* and aſſiſting to Converſion and Faith, Satan is the *grand enemy* to this conſideration and meditating of a mans ſpiritual condition; if thou wilt do *Satans will*, and gratifie him the beſt thou canſt, if thou wilt give him the *beſt ſecurity* of utter undoing thy ſelf, let him ſee and know thou wilt not conſider and *muſe* on thy ſouls concerns, but look quite another way.

7. Whither do thy thoughts *ſink and ſoak*, but into the baſe Earth, and in the baſe things of it; he that looks with his *bodily eye*, if he looks not upward, may look many other ways than downward, right forward, on the right, or left hand; but thy ſoul's eye, if it look not to things above, it looks *downward* to the things below, *Col.* 3. 5. the *baſe dry earth* drinks up all thy thoughts.

8. When wilt thou *begin to think*, to think to any *purpoſe indeed*, when will that time be? ſhall it be when thou art moſt *timeleſs* and *heartleſs*? when thou haſt *leaſt leiſure*, *leaſt fitneſs*, bodily fitneſs and diſpoſition, of eaſe, ſtrength, ſpirits, and ſenſes? when thou haſt leaſt heart-fitneſs, of deſires and willingneſs, which with time will wear away and be leſs?

The longer thou *diſuſeſt thy ſelf* to good and ſerious thinkings, the leſs fit and diſpoſed thou wilt every way be, and the more will *vanity of thoughts*

grow upon thee, *dye thy mind* into the *grain Colour of habitual vanity*; the *more* will *thy heart* grow up and *ripen* in an averſneſs from all *good thoughts*, *harden* and grow more *ſinfully* and *deſperately* ſet againſt ſeriouſneſs, all ſuch *meditating* as is neceſſary to true repenting.

9. Wilt thou defer *thinking* and *conſidering* till it be too late, till *time* and the *ſeaſon* of *grace* ſhall be no longer, till life, and ſoul, and Heaven be irrecoverably loſt? Wilt thou loſe this ſhort time here, till thou comeſt to an *Eternity of time*, to *think of thy neglects of thinking*? to muſe when it will do no good, when muſing on thy *not muſing* and *meditating*, will turn *into torturing and tormenting thee for ever*?

Ah, therefore now *while it is call'd to day*, now while *thinking may do thee good*, good to converting and ſaving; ah now *bemoan thy ſelf*, and ſad, ſo ſad, dreadful, and dangerous ſtate; never reſt or be quiet till thou becomeſt a *ſerious perſon*, one that uſeth his *thinking power* to the right end, and in the right manner, to *meditate thy ſelf home*, as the Prodigal did home to his Fathers houſe, to be received with great joy.

1. Conſider therefore, this is one part of *wiſdom indeed*, of wiſdom for thy ſelf, when thy *ſoul concerns* have their allowance of due conſideration.

2. Never expect a *cure of that worm*, that *Wolf in thy breaſt*, of thoſe *gnawing*, *grinding pains*, and terrours of conſcience, until thou by conſideration come to convert and turn to God.

3. Never wilt thou taſte *of peace of conſcience*, joy that is *unſpeakable* and *full of glory*, until thy *thoughtvanity* be healed, and thou becomeſt a ſeriouſly meditating perſon.

1. There-

1. Therefore begin at that first Meditation of thy unspeakable misery under sin, Gods wrath for it, death eternal awaiting thee, and which by deaths soon coming may seize thee, and seal thee up in it for ever.

2. Labour, that consideration may rightly issue in an *awakening thee out of thy deep security*, in a contrition of Spirit, and a right preparative humbling, *dashing* thy pride and carnal confidence.

1. To *fear exceedingly*, for thy so great misery and danger, by being *under* so great *wrath* of a God, and the *curse* of his Law, *Act.* 16. 29.

2. To *sorrow and mourn deeply* for this thy misery, *thy mirth and laughter being turned into heaviness*, *Jam.* 4. 9.

3. To despair of help in thy self, see the *insufficiency* of thy own goodness and righteousness, and of thy own ability of *wisdom* to devise, *will to chuse*, or any power of thine to save thee.

4. To come from former carelesness and negligence, to an earnest *care and desire* to be eased and delivered, *Act.* 2. 37.

2. Then *being weary and heavy-laden*, endeavour the second consideration of the *way of relief and help.*

1. By *pondering the infinite love of God*, his willingness to receive broken-hearted sinners to mercy, pardon, reconciliation, adoption, and full salvation.

2. The *fullness of Redemption* in Christ *freely* offer'd to all.

3. By *pondering the Promises* of salvation, righteousness, so *perfect and glorious* pardon, so full of all graces and happiness: Christ must be re-

ceived in the Promiſes, reſted upon as *ſure*, *good*, and *free*.

4. By *earneſt*, *often praying* for grace, faith, and other graces, a *new heart*, and new principles, which will introduce *a new power*, and make godlineſs in all the duties of it, and this of Meditation, ſweet and eaſie.

CHAP. VII.

An Application to ſuch as are godly, and have taſted the ſweetneſs of Meditation.

2. *Uſe of exhortation.* THE next perſwaſion and *inſtigation* is of all ſuch who from a *right principle* planted in them by heart-changing grace, and their *experience* from often and uſual practice of Meditation, have taſted the benefit and ſweetneſs of it; to take *heed* of neglecting it, and to endeavour a *conſtancy* and improvement in it.

As there is *nothing harder* than to *hedge* in the thoughts and govern them, ſo how hard is it to make them *keep and beat this path of Meditation*, to have the ſoul go, as with Hinds feet, moſt readily and with enlargements of ſteps in it? *The holieſt heart is too apt to flag and be weary, in the beſt pathway to Heaven.*

Meditation hath a *ſtrong and active* Enemy in every boſom; when any would do this good, evil is preſent, in *backwardneſs* to it, *regret and reluctancy* riſes up, puts in *a caveat*, *hangs a weight* and clog to hinder, which *watchfulneſs* and reſolution muſt

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ſpy out and caſt off: *Caſt off every weight*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 1. Every weight the fleſh caſts upon a Duty, the ſpirit muſt *caſt off, and then run*; ſin at all times can *eaſily beſet us*, and now at this time we may eaſily find it.

How eaſily will ſin *beſet us with excuſes*? how eaſily with *whole Troops* of Arguments will it charge us? how eaſily with *ſwarms of diverſions*, diverting thoughts, purpoſes, affections, will it ſeek to warp us? this thing, and the other, and a third, and a thouſand, that flye about as *thick in the heart*, as motes in the Sun-ſhine.

1. Meditation is harder than ſome other Duties of godlineſs; for in *other Duties* the *body comes* in, as an aſſiſtant to the ſoul, and lends a hand of help: As in praying, there may the voice come in, which is a great furtherance, *keeping better* up the minds intention, and keeping *better off* deadneſs and diſtraction: In reading, the *eye is exerciſed*, and the mind is the better, as to attention and heeding, if not to heat and intention: *The eye affects the heart*; ſo preaching hath the *ear* to convey and make the *better impreſſion*: But in Meditation, the ſoul acts *ſingle* and unaſſiſted, without a *ſtirring up*, or *exciting* by any ſenſe, or any help from the body, and ſo it is the harder, as the condition of our Nature now makes it: In the ſtate of imperfection, we need the bodies help to farther the ſoul in its workings in ſome ſort.

2. Meditation hath *leaſt opportunities* of coming under *obſervation* of others, and thereby *leſs provocation* and encouragement for doing well, by either bad or good, before whom, in other caſes, our *light ſhould ſhine, and God by them be glorified.*

3. Meditation is hard, in that it is an *acting of the quickeſt faculty*, and the *moſt ſlippery piece* of the ſoul; nothing is nimbler than the thinking power, no act in the world *quicker*, and of more expedite motion than that of a thought, and nothing ſooner *ſlips off* the object, or thing acted upon, and makes a way faſter to a new, than the thinking faculty; like the *Bird* put wild into a Cage, the door is no ſooner open, but ſhe is gone.

Meditation is harder, being not *bare thinking*, a *flaſh*, a fit for an inſtant, a *touching*; but a fixing and ſtay of thoughts, a detaining them, which otherwiſe are as Oyl in a mans right hand, that will not be retain'd: A carnal heart counts all Ordinances, and ſpiritual engagements, *but coming into bonds*, tyings with Cords, longs to break them and be free; ſo doth it by this Cord and tye of Meditation; it's harſh work to the fleſh.

O it's a *moſt high attainment*, to be able to ſay, *O God my heart is fixed*, *Pſal.* 108. 1. fixed as to the purpoſe of heart, the choice and intent of the will, ſo to have the head, the mind, *to ceaſe the rowling*, ranging vanity and ſlipperineſs, and to act fixedly in the way of ſeriouſneſs, not be a *light-headed*, but a muſing man, a *perſon of ponderings*, and *thought-ſtayings*; like the *Bee* that lights on the Flower, and ſtays to have the Honey with her e're ſhe removes.

4. Meditation *is the harder*, in that *Satan* hath greater power upon, and more *immediate paſſage* to the faculty of imagination, than other faculties of the will and affections; he *works not ſo immediately* on the will and affections, as upon the imagination, and there he endeavours *interruptions* by his injecti-

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ons and ſuggeſtions; there he *endeavours diverſions* to think *quite another way* from the work in hand, and diſturbances, caſting in *by-thoughts*, and ſundry objects of different or contrary nature to the duty we are in.

As Satan *fill'd Ananias heart*, but firſt by filling the *imagination* with thought of covetouſneſs; ſo he can *caſt ſuddenly into the beſt heart* thoughts and apprehenſions, when about the beſt work, to diſturb and hinder.

Beſides, conſider his *malice is great* againſt Meditation, knowing how *great advantage* comes to us by it, and how much diſadvantage to him.

Satan is much prejudiced by ponderings; he ever *watches* when this work is taking in hand, and therefore Chriſtian, thou haſt greater reaſon of taking the greater heed; to *watch him* that ſo watches thee, to *fight him* that fights againſt thee, and ſo envies thee the help of this Ordinance, that would not have thee enjoy the freedom of *one good, one ſerious thought*, but is caſting the duſt of *evil thoughts* in the eyes of our minds, when *they are looking up* to Heaven, but *principally* he envies and oppoſes *ſeriouſneſs*, ſearchings and dwelling of thoughts upon ſpiritual things.

Satan deals with us here, as *deceitful Courtiers* and Councellors have done with their Maſters, *diverting* them from minding their affairs, and all *right ſeriouſneſs*, by pleaſures, and new devices, under the pretence of *freedom from incumbrances*, and trouble and enjoying themſelves; but that hereby *they might* more ſecurely proſecute & compaſs their own private intereſts. Satan had rather we ſhould do any thing than keep up a *ſeriouſneſs in Meditation*

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(or any other holy Duties) which may keep us awake and in a watchful posture, against his enterprises.

5. Meditation is the harder, *by reason of the exemplary slightfulness* of so many, we daily meet and converse with, who *refuse* and slight *all seriousness*, as *unnecessary niceness*, or neglect it, *out of slothfulness*, and *lothness* to trouble themselves.

Bad Examples are *very infectious*, apt to convey a *secret* poyson into mens hearts, when they heed them not; by touching *this pitch*, the best are ready to be defiled.

6. Meditation is like the road or passage, where many things meet us, justle us, and are ready to turn us out of the way; cares they strive to come in, businesses and multiplicity of affairs, sudden emergencies, and sundry things, that may attempt to interpose; and these, if our watch and guard be not the stronger and stricter, will miscarry the Duty.

Yea sometimes *one Duty may drive out another*; often we *let holy duties interfere, and cross each other*, hearing, praying, and the rest, sometimes there's *hastening from one* to another, *sometimes letting one detain us so long*, that others are cut short, and so helps are turned *in part* into hindrances, opportunities for some Duties *into obstructions* to others, when *godly prudence* allows every thing its season and due proportion of time.

The *external hindrances* to Meditation are many from common business, and things of this life; and we often *create our own hindrances* by our *sloth* and imprudence, not carefully redeeming and wisely ordering our times and opportunities.

Ah then my soul, if Meditation be so high, so hard, as to its spiritual nature, and hath withal such

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Enemies and oppoſitions, look to it then I muſt *the more cautiouſly, but not leſs reſolutely perform it.*

The Moraliſts ſay, that *difficulty* is *eos virtutis*, the *incentive* and heightener of magnanimity; to a *great and heroick ſpirit* nothing muſt be ſo great as to *outlook it* and diſcourage it: The greater and *braver fiſh* ſwim againſt the ſtream; *the noble Chriſtian by difficulty and oppoſition is caution'd, but not cowed out.*

If there *were nothing* to ſet againſt and weigh with the former cautions and arguments from Enemies and oppoſition, if no *high inducements* and advantageous arguments to put into the ſcale of *perſwaſion*, to weigh againſt ſuch as fill the ſcale of *diſwaſion*, it then might the more *reverſe and turn the edge* of thy courage (yet arguments from evil and miſchief, in many caſes are ſufficient alone) the danger of an *armed Enemies approaching*, as in *Jacob*'s caſe; the danger of *deadly poyſon*, prepared for thee, or *infection* coming very nigh thee is enough. But we have encouragements, and thoſe in *full meaſure, preſſed down and running over.* As *Eliſha* to his ſervant diſcouraged, when encompaſt in *Dothan, we have moe with us than againſt us*: What if there be *a principle of fleſh*, that makes oppoſition; yet thy *principle of ſpirit and grace*, is a real ground of hope and help: If thy grace, Chriſtian, be true, *though but a grain of muſtard-ſeed*, it will live, and hold, and act and grow, act into *endeavour* and ſtriving till it overcomes: A principle will help thee.

1. Conſider, a *principle introduces* an *inclination*, *a bent* and *tendency* of heart againſt the *inclination* and

and contrary tendency of corruption, *Psal.* 119. 112. and it's a principle must live, and the contrary carnal principle must die; *Rom.* 6. 11. *Reckon your selves dead unto sin, but alive unto God*: Sin as to *the purchase of Christ* is dead in the Saints *totally*, and it is dead in the *habit and root initially* and in part, in respect of the *communicated and inherent grace* of Christ, which upon union with Christ, begins the death of sin in mortification, *Rom.* 6.

2. A principle, besides inclination and tendency, introduces *power and ability*; as the Flesh hath its power, so the spirit and grace hath its contrary power.

3. A principle *introduces facility*; though the Flesh makes Duties hard, yet the Spirit is ready, and makes godliness easie.

4. A principle *introduces delight and complacency*, the Flesh acts reluctancy, the Spirit delight and pleasure, *Psal.* 119. 47.

5. A principle works *holding on and constancy*, *Gal.* 5. as the Flesh lusts against the Spirit, so the Spirit against the Flesh (*Psal.* 119. 12. last part of the verse) not only begins but holds on; a principle *will help you* to hold on, for God will hold that on; *Phil.* 1. 6. *He that hath begun a good work in you, will finish it to the day of Christ.*

6. A principle is blest, by the using of it, *with progress* and growth; the flesh that shall decrease and waste, but the grain of Mustard-seed shall grow to a great tree, *Math.* 13. 32.

7. A principle shall be crown'd; *by contending* and striving, with *glorious conquest and victory*; the Spirit wars against the Flesh, and it conquers in the issue, by its still warring; *judgment is brought forth to victory*, *Rom.* 8. 37.

Ah,

Ah, *never be diſcouraged* for any thing within, be very ſenſible of ſin within, and the ſtirrings of it, but *ſink not under* the ſight of it, take thou encouragement, Chriſtian, to fight it, and to ſubdue it; if thy hearts badneſs appear, its backwardneſs and croſſneſs to any Duty, know you *can get nothing by giving way*, but by going on and ſtriving; and uſe this herein as thy rule, *wear out thy own backwardneſs to and wearineſs in a Duty, by doing it in a reſolved conſtancy, wear out the indiſpoſition to duty, by doing that Duty, and doing it fervently.*

2. What if Satan be ſuch an Enemy, yet have we not more and ſtronger with us than him? we have the holy Spirit that helps to pray, and he will help us to meditate.

If he ſees we are *labouring to get* up the Mount in Meditation, he *will give us his hand* to help us up; if Satan and all Hell be againſt us in this or any other Duty, he will be for us, yea, Father, Son, and Spirit are and will be all aſſiſtants to us: Do we not uſe to ſay, *God came in* at ſuch a time, *in ſuch a Duty*? He delights to ſee how the *pulſe of thy ſpirit beats* heavenward, how *the eye* of thy ſoul *looks upward*, how *it fixes its looks of heavenly love upon him*; he delights to help up thy heart in its holy Meditation, to help it *tower up to Heaven*, to taſte of thoſe ſurmounting glorious delicacies, prepared for his beloveds entertainment and higheſt ſolace.

What *others in their exemplary careleſneſs*, hold forth what their mindleſneſs is, they uſe; muſt not have any impreſſion of *diſcouragement*, or prove to us any *impediment*.

It is no ſtaying till we can take every one along

with

with us in our journey to Heaven.

Neither muſt the *example of any*, the higheſt, the greateſt, the richeſt, the wiſeſt, and learnedeſt, the neareſt related, the deareſt affected, *nor any under any conſideration* whatever, have that ill influence upon us, either to *diſcourage* or *divert* us, weaken our hands, or hinder our making ſtraight ſteps in this bleſſed path of meditating diligently upon heavenly things.

Neither let *the cares and pleaſures*, buſineſs and affairs of this world, hinder this ſoul great affair of ſerious Meditation in the ſeaſons of it.

The Saints *of Chriſt in all ages have found a way to this duty, as well as others*, and that through the throng, and multiplicity of crowding and juſtling occaſions. As it is ſaid of our Lord Chriſt, in *Luk.* 4. 30. when they of *Nazareth*, angry with him, thruſt him out of the City, and would have caſt him down headlong, *he paſſing through the midſt of them goes his way*; the Saints of Chriſt have made their way, *paſſing through the midſt* of buſineſſes and emergencies, troubles, and diſquiets. They had a *wiſdom given them* to find out a way, they *had a will, a purpoſe, and reſolvedneſs* fixt, ſo as to overlook and overcome obſtructions and lets, from throngings of buſineſs, and multitudes of ſtill ſucceſſively interpoſing diverſions: That holy *David* who had ſo many highly urging and preſſing occaſions, as no man now, whatſoever he be, can have more; yet he made his way continually through all the throngings of ſo high importancies, and moſt urgent affairs; he had a wiſdom given to find a way, and a *will* to reſolve to Meditate, and he did it daily.

Pſal.

Pſal. 119. 48. *He ſays he will meditate in Gods* Statutes; when he ſo determined, *certainly he did it not raſhly, and without conſideration* of his many occaſions and weighty affairs, and thoſe great diverſions which he might after meet with at home and abroad, in Peace and War; yet thus *he reſolves*: And *Pſal.* 119. 97. he ſaith it, *and to the Lord himſelf*, that he did it, and all the day; firſt he ſaith he will, then ſaith he doth meditate, and ſaith it to the all-knowing God.

It therefore hence appears how feaſable and *practicable* this Duty is; notwithſtanding cares, buſineſs, troubles of all ſorts whatever, from the world and living in it, there is *an attainable will.*

1. A godly heart may come *to ſay I will, may ſet* an *univerſal purpoſe* of heart, a firm purpoſe, and a purpoſe of equal extent, to the whole latitude of Goſpel Duties, and whatſoever the Word requires.

2. And likewiſe he may have *a latitude of wiſdom*, to underſtand his way, every way he is to walk, *Prov.* 14. 8. *The wiſdom of the wiſe is to underſtand his way. Pſal.* 119. 98. *Thou haſt made me wiſer than mine Enemies*; and 99. *I have more underſtanding than my teachers*: There *David* diſcovers he had wiſdom for his way, and how he arrived at ſuch a height of wiſdom, and directs us how to come by it.

3. And as a Chriſtian may come to *ſay he will* do ſuch a required Duty, and arrive at the wiſdom of doing it, ſo by *grace* he may come up *to an anſwerable extenſiveneſs* of practice and performance, walking in all the ways of the Lord, as *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, *Luke* 1. 6. *David* oft profeſſes his *both*

uni-

universality, as of his heart-purpose, so *of his practice*, as the 119. Psalm, and others, abundantly shew.

Yet first *fixing our purpose in the strength of Christ*, then *following after* the wisdom of our way, making it a *grand scope* to attain the wisdom, the right and sure wisdom of our soul affairs, to be Artists in Religion; and then *falling close* to practise what we resolve and understand; this with Christs help will make our work, any work upon our hands to prove easie, *Prov.* 8. 9. They are all plain to him that understands, *easie* the old Translation hath it: we have a saying in Divinity, *Iter ad pietatem, est intra ipsam pietatem*, the way to godliness is within godliness; that is, the way to learn it, is to act it, and the way to *facilitate* and make it easie, is *by exercising our selves* still in it, setting upon, and keeping up the practice of it: He that *doth much* in it fervently and frequently, will come *to perform with increasing facility*: *Slack and listless doing*, slight and negligent performing may come to *loathing* and leaving, end with the disadvantage of a *far worse temper* of heart-averseness than there was at the first.

Formality in Religion ends oft in falling *first off from it*, and then *falling out with it*; contrarily doing with care and fervency, *encreaseth spiritual strength*, and the encrease of strength makes the work more easie.

In *using* to do it earnestly, we arrive at a doing easily: O therefore let every one *be highly encouraged* to hold up our constancy in this excellent Duty, to walk with an extensive and increasing evenness and equality, in this so *pleasant high road* to Heaven, both

both in *daily Meditation*; in that for the entrance, and that other for the ending of the day; in also the *occasional solemn* Meditation, that rare way of spiritual improvement in wisdom and heavenly warmth; and in that way of Meditation, *by short and sudden* ejaculations. This *threefold cord will draw* strongly Heaven-ward, will make thy soul go *from strength to strength*, from warmth to warmth, from pleasure to pleasure; make thee *keep upon the wing*, mount up aloft, and not be weary by the successive varieties, and the abundant sweetness flowing hereby into thy bosom; and to *winde up* this instigation in a word,

1. Is my *heart dead* at any time and listless, how soon will Meditation quicken it, and reduce it *into activity?*

2. Is it *barren* and unfruitful alone or in company, what *rare rich matter* can meditating bring in, and *spread over the barren soil of my spirit*, and make it soon put forth fruitfully?

3. Is it *chill and cold*, without *wonted warmth and vivacity*, what fuel can it fetch to kindle a fire on this hearth, fuel from Heaven and Earth, from the Word and Works of God, and all sorts of objects whatever, spiritualizing them for my use, what sparks can it strike, what coals can it kindle and blow up into a flame to thaw my frozen heart?

4. How high *a preparative is Meditation to* prayer, to enrich it with *choicest materials*, to enliven it, and *make it burning hot* in holy fervency?

5. How *rare a dispositive* to hearing the Word of Christ, to open the everlasting doors of the heart, to widen the heart for a letting in more freely of heavenly Truths, and increasing the good hearts treasure, to make us swift to hear, to hear with the

largeſt and livelieſt affections, readieſt purpoſe, moſt raiſed and fixed reſolutions, to receive and obey the Word in every thing, moſt abundant readineſs to be moulded into the form of Doctrine that ſhall be delivered?

6. What an efficacious helper is Meditation *to ſpiritual digeſtion*, and *reducing divine Truths* into ſound and good nouriſhment, *which miſcarry* in others for want of due meditating?

And what a mighty aſſiſtant is it to holy Duties? what is there performed wiſely and with vigour, unleſs directed and aſſiſted by Meditation?

For to *make the inſtigations more full*, we may look back to the ends of Meditation, and the afterward grounds were given and enlarged upon, which being many, will be too long to repeat.

Two things only remain to finiſh this Improvement.

1. The *Evidences* and Characters of a right and due Meditation.

2. The *Directions and Rules* for the beſt managing of it.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Evidences *of a due Meditation.*

FOr the Evidences of a due and right Meditation, it muſt have the *Nature*, *Properties*, and *Attendants* of it; and therefore it is not to be *taken up as a cuſtom*, as a thing *made to ſtop the mouth of a calling and urging conſcience*, or a meer *acting for Notions*, a ſtudy

ſtudy and ſearch *of Curioſity*, to know Novelty, or to know much, and be able to hold diſcourſe with others.

But it muſt have a higher nature, *purer ends*, and *be performed in another ſort*, then an only wiſe or a learned man, yea then any formal Chriſtian can act or compaſs of himſelf.

And for *the Characters* of a right holy Meditation, there will be no need to fetch any other lights of diſcovery, *but only to take up* and hold thoſe to this intendment, which were opened in the diſcovery of the nature of divine Meditation.

1. As making it *our real and high obedience to* God, the *ſoveraign Lord* of our ſouls, *and to the golden Scepter of his Word* in that expreſs Law of his, laid upon the thinking power, and grounded upon the high and infinite obligations he hath on us, to impoſe this thought-tribute, and homage, a pure obedience to him, and doing his will herein.

He that meditates aright, hath been taught and learnt to obey God, to yield it to him as his due. *I am under my God*, ſaith the right Chriſtian, *and infinitely obliged to all which he commands me.* This among others, is one of his righteous and holy Laws, one great ſignification of his Royal will; I muſt not, will not deny it, diſpute it, or put it from me, but comply freely with it.

And this comes from *that ſpring, that root* which lyes at the bottom of the heart, that *ſupereminent love* to God (the holy hearts chief good) and the great ground of all right obedience.

Rom. 13. 10. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, and ſo is it *the fulfilling of this particular Law of holy Meditation*, love to God, ſo infinitely excellent in him-

himſelf, and who hath ſo unſpeakably loved the holy ſoul.

Therefore if it be the right and *genuine obedience*, it hath this high, *this warm ſpring of love* running in this channel, this of Meditation, an over-powering conſtraining love that breeds this thinking, this looking of the ſoul in Meditation.

O therefore try if this *heavenly love* hath firſt been planted in the ſoil of thy heart, if *from a new* heart *circumciſed to love the Lord* above all; that thence thou comeſt to love Meditation, becauſe thou loveſt the Law-giver firſt, who *writes his Law*, and writes this particular Law in thy heart by love to it, *by making thee* a lover of Meditation.

2. If Meditation be *genuine and right*, then is it from a *choice of will*, wrought up by the power of *holy love ſubduing and mortifying* carnal and formerly predominant unwillingneſs and ſtubbornneſs, reluctancy and refuſals of this work, and framing it *to willingneſs, freeneſs*, and fixedneſs of purpoſe to do it, and hold it, *Pſal.* 119. 48. *I will meditate*, ſaith *the holy Pſalmiſt*; Meditation aroſe from reſolution, from *a will fixed*, and that aroſe from *love acted*, and working the will to reſolution. Therefore in the 97. verſe of this Pſalm, he ſpeaks it to God himſelf, *O how love I thy law*! and what fruit doth this noble root of love put forth? it is *my meditation all the day*: Meditation of the Law proceeds from love to the Law.

Love *lay at the bottom*, and that engaged the will into a firm reſolution to meditate. Never is the will freer, and its purpoſe firmer, then when love inclines and engages it. The *higheſt and ſtrongeſt reſolutions* that ever were taken up by any holy heart,

were

were the rare *products and ſweet fruits* of heavenly love, love efficaciouſly exciting the will, winding it up to the top, and then fixing it faſt.

3. Where the work of Meditation is right, *the aims and ends of it are pure, ſpiritual, and holy*; it is carried beyond and above ſelf; it is an acting *with ſelf-denying*: ſelf is neither *the total*, nor the predominant ingredient in this undertaking.

That which Chriſt calls for, *of denying a mans ſelf*, *Mark* 8. 34. in the *extent* of all Chriſtianity, *muſt particularly be performed* in this duty.

Self-*ſeeking* muſt not be uppermoſt, not the main intent or inducement: For this is the Sphere an unſound heart moves ever in.

The aim and end *in the beſt natural man* is never *higher then ſelf*, and no other really then ſelf, and that becauſe he chiefly loves himſelf.

But a right work muſt be aimed and acted above all *to the living God*. Therefore *Zec.* 7. 5. God tells them their faſting was not right, becauſe they did it not to God; ſo is Meditation, or any other duty not right, if it be *not to him, aimed above all at his Glory*.

In this reſpect therefore, Religion is in Scripture called *Godlineſs*, becauſe it is a frame of ſpirit acting above all ſelf-ends and inferior reſpects, unto the living God above all.

So *Heb.* 9. 14. To ſerve the living God; works not done to the living God, are dead works; a living work is aimed and level'd to the living God.

The end more particularly muſt be *the glorifying* God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *Do all to the glory of God.* If eating, drinking, and ſuch inferior things, then much more holy duties muſt be done to Gods glory.

There must be an *inward powerful principle* that can aim so highly, really, and an acting of that principle that God is actually glorified.

It is not *enough* to *say we do*, as many erringly affirm, they aim their duties, when they never had first that right principle of Holiness wrought in their hearts. Without the principle of Holiness it is impossible to have *holy aimings*, *holy ends*. It's impossible without an eye to see to level at a mark.

Wheresoever there's a right doing, *there's a potent elevating* principle, that sets the spirit above the predominancy of self-seeking, and acts it *into a reality of God-exalting* above all, that kindles and inflames the soul into an ardency of desire, love, delight of glorifying God in every undertaking.

This is *unspeakably sweet*, and heart-gladding; nothing pleases a holy heart more then when the *heart below* can run in some degree parallel with the hearts of Saints and Angels above, in hallowing and advancing the highest God, and his Name.

Try we therefore if our meditating be a *real acting up* to the *grand scope* and highest end, the exalting of God, if his honour be indeed the preponderating inducement and greatest soul-aim.

2. Happiness *and our own Salvation* was the next aim formerly mentioned, happiness propounded and declared in the Gospel, and no other. To this next subordinate end must all the golden lines of holy duties tend, here they must center. Every right duty must be *a real levelling at* Gospel-happiness, that which *God proffers*, and *Christ hath purchased*.

If Meditation be right, it is a part of true wisdom for our selves, *Prov.* 9. 12. Wisdom to salvation, as really aimed at it, as any marksman aims at his mark.

God

God, next to himſelf and his glory, allows and requires to look and ſeek, labour and ſtrive for eternal life and happineſs; and all our duties, as they are ſubſervient to his glory, ſo our own happineſs *is complicate and wrapt up in it*, yet not above it, or equal with it, but next under it. Accordingly therefore, in this duty, as in all others, *our aim at happineſs muſt not be a meer ſelf-ſeeking, it muſt not terminate only in our ſelves; but our own happineſs muſt be aimed at for glorifying God by it.*

We *muſt aim at happineſs*, and being in Heaven, thereby *to be in a moſt perfect ſtate*, that we may attain *the moſt perfect principle* for the higheſt exalting of God.

Although in Heaven, *ſeeing more*, and taſting more, and having the veſſels of body and ſoul filled up with glory and happineſs, makes our ſtate more glorious; yet the end of that ſeeing, taſting, and all enjoyings there, are to *put us* into a moſt perfect capacity, *higheſt heart-readineſs*, and *alacrity*, upon the moſt *over-powring incentives* to lift up to the utmoſt the glorious praiſes of God. This then *is a very conſiderable* particular, that beſides glorifying God, the ſupreme end, aiming at our own ſalvation, muſt be more then for our ſelves.

We uſe to ſpeak of ſeveral ſpiritual ends relating to our own ſpiritual good, which we are allowed to ſet up, and ſeek, and ſtrive after; yet all theſe muſt have *this reduction*, muſt all have this glory of God for their chief end.

The laſt end, as hath been ſaid, gives the rules to all both ſubſervient ways and ends.

Therefore in our examination, let us *take in* all the ſpiritual ends before ſpoken of, for *heavenly light*

and larger knowledge, for *a ſpirit of wiſdom* to be wiſer to ſalvation, to *be warmer at* the heart, melt off all incumbrances, make up to Heaven better, to fix our reſolutions firmer, ſtrengthen *our grand purpoſe* of ſtill walking with God, to *ſtabliſh our courſe*, and make *ſtraiter ſteps for our feet, and to preſs harder to the mark.* Are our ſpirits *acted to theſe aims*, and all thoſe other, Meditation is ſo excellently and uſefully appointed to?

2. Do we meditate *in the right way* of calling off our thoughts from *impertinencies* and diverſions?

Do we *ſet a ſtrong guard* upon our ſpirits, and watch them diligently?

Do we *act Meditation* in bending our minds to it, ſtrive to act with *all ſerionſneſs* we can? Do we *act ſearching* and pondering, and *keep up conſtancy* of thoughts till we both bring our hearts to the heavenly temper, and *the duty to the kindly iſſue* it ſhould have, and cannot be content with any thing, but that a God who ſees our actings will approve of?

CHAP. IX.

Of the Directions relating to Meditation. Firſt, for ſuch as would begin.

AFter *ſome Characters* given of a right Meditation, I ſhall next *ſpeak of Directions* or Rules to be obſerved about it. The *Rules muſt be ſuited* to the ſeveral ſorts of perſons that will ſet upon this work, or proceed in it with ſucceſs.

1. If it be a perſon who would enter upon this way

way, being *ſenſible of the ſin of* hitherto neglecting it, and is now *willing to be* adviſed how to perform it.

Then conſider, it is no undertaking it, or hope of doing it aright, and holding on with conſtancy, and to the ſpiritual advantages of it, unleſs there be an endeavour after a right principle, a living ſpring within to found and ſtill feed a due performance of this ſpiritual work.

To undertake it without, thou wilt find it too high and hard, *arrive at the beſt*, at a *formal doing*, a ſlight and overly doing, and in *the end grow weary* of it, and caſt it off, and ſo return to it no more.

Therefore *thy great intendment*, to which thou muſt bend thy ſelf and whole ſoul (which ſhould not, muſt not be given over, until it be effected) is to make ſure of a *new heart*, this will *bring in a new power*, a new *principle*, *introduce a bent* and inclination of ſpirit, a *love unto it*, a firm and abiding purpoſe, a *rooted reſolution* for doing it againſt all difficulty and oppoſition. This will make the duty of Meditation eaſie, and alſo ſweet; by the pleaſure and advantages found in this heavenly way, thou wilt be encouraged to hold on, *ſucceſs will encourage thee*, that will ſweeten the way to thee, and help to ſtabliſh thee in it.

Though thou canſt not *change* thy own heart, and make it new, *lay in* a new principle of Holineſs; but it muſt be God *who gives the new heart*, Ezek. 36. 26, 27. *And works the will and the deed of his own good pleaſure*, Phil. 2. 13. Yet as he calls thee to convert, and in order to thy converting, requires thee *to conſider*, and *bethink thyſelf*; ſo is it thy neceſſary and *important duty* to conſider and ponder deeply and frequently thoſe things, and in that manner

manner & order which are most effectual to that end, & which God uses to set home. For by putting thy self into Gods prescribed way of seriously and frequently considering, thou mayest meet with a help, with God helping at last, *who helps them that seek him* diligently, and give not over striving.

That *relation is remarkable* of the bad Son whom his father dying, calls to him, and gets him to make this promise, That every day he should for but one quarter of an hour meditate of some one thing or other, what he would. Accordingly he every day employs a quarter of an hour, or some time in serious thinking: But this at last *most happily* issues in serious *considering* his sinful state, and *a real converting* to God at last.

Thus *often it hath come to pass*, when persons have set themselves to consider, as God in Scripture exhorts, it hath *ended* in a true returning; so the Prodigal is described, *Luke* 15. So *Ezek.* 18.

If thou art *very desirous* more particularly to be here directed what to do to obtain the right principle, and thence the right way of acting this duty and others in the holy and spiritual required manner.

I must not engage far in so large a point, yet if I *exceed something*, it will, I hope, get pardon. Only I shall mention some particulars more necessary for this so weighty a concern.

If *really and in good earnest* thou wilt engage, strive to purpose for obtaining a sure principle of performing this or any duty aright, a principle of Grace and Holiness, a new heart, and a new spirit.

1. You must go about it with the *greatest seriousness* that ever thou canst, and endeavour *the firmest and*

and ſtrongeſt purpoſe for proſecuting it, *till thou haſt attained it.* But then thou muſt ſee thy *utter inability* without Gods lending a hand to help thee in ſo high an undertaking.

It is thou muſt endeavour, but *God he muſt draw thee.* Joh. 6. 44. *No man can come to me unleſs the Father draw him.* Thou muſt ſtrive for, *but God muſt give repentance.* 2 Tim. 2. 25. *If God will give repentance.* Jer. 31. 18. *Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned.* Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart will I give you.* Yet God muſt ſee us, when he calls for returning, to endeavour, and ſtrive, and wait for his giving, *who works the will and the deed of his own good pleaſure.*

2. Thou *muſt reſolve to ſequeſter* thy ſelf at times, at fit ſeaſons from *all diverſions*, not ſuffering any thing then to interrupt thee: thou muſt ſit alone as *Lam.* 3. 28.

3. Do all *thou poſſibly canſt* to be *awakened* out of thy *deep ſecurity*, ſo long and ſo dangerouſly reſted in. *Eph.* 5. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from the dead*, &c.

For this *thou muſt gather all awakening conſiderations* the Scriptures furniſh thee with, concerning the *inconceivable miſery* every ſinner is in.

But *conſider*, things ſpoken in general in Scripture, and not brought and ſet home on thy ſelf in particular, *will not* work to an awakening. Neither *will* thy *ſaying* and acknowledging thy ſinfulneſs and miſery in general, ſerve; *Generals humble not, Generals hit not home.*

A *ſingle Arrow or Bullet* will not ſerve againſt a whole flock of fowls, but ſcattering ſhot muſt be uſed.

Take

Take therefore *all the warmeſt conſiderations* thou canſt, and heap them *as coals of fire* on thy own head, bring them *home* to thy own heart, to *melt down* thy frozen frame of ſinful ſecurity.

Do all thou canſt by the light of the Scripture, and beg, *beg moſt earneſtly the light of the Holy Spirit* to convince thee of thy extreme miſery. It is he, *Joh.* 16. 9. *That convinces of ſin and miſery.*

Endeavour to thy utmoſt to rightly found this work by moſt *induſtrious ſtriving*, to ſee the exceeding *ſinfulneſs of ſin*, *Rom.* 7. the abounding evil in it, *Rom.* 5. And do this *by fulleſt poſſible pondering* the great tranſcending evil of the leſſer ſins, or ſuch as are comparatively ſmall, and we count not great; ſee it in examples, as *Uzzas dying* by an immediate ſtroke for but touching *once* the Ark, 1 *Chro.* 13. 10. The *Bethſhemites* for an *only* looking but into the Ark; fifty thouſand and ſeventy perſons were ſlain by an hand from Heaven, 1 *Sam.* 6. 19. *Adam and all his poſterity with him* were undone by his *eating of a fruit*, becauſe forbidden, which in the nature was no *immortal* thing, as idolatry, murder, &c. but ſinful, by a *peculiar precept of tryal* broken. Yea, if *Adam*, when he was the repreſentative of all, had ſinned the leaſt imaginable ſin in one *commiſſion*, ſin'd in one ſinful, *one vain* thought, it had been his own and all his ſucceeding poſterities ruine, nay in the *leaſt omiſſion*. Though there be many ſorts of ſins, with ſundry meaſures and aggravations, yet there's none ſo ſmall, but is *crimen læſæ majeſtatis infinitæ*, is *high Treaſon* againſt an infinite Majeſty.

This is a *grand intent* of God in the whole Bible, and in alſo his *punitive Providences*, to demonſtrate Gods heart in *his diſlike* and loathing all ſin, that it might

might blot out *our miſtakes*, and reduce us, *ſtamp* our judgments and hearts with a ſuitable impreſſion, a ſenſe of *all ſin*, or whatſoever is but near to it.

Therefore among others, that's very *remarkable*, *Num.* 6. 9, 10, 11. The *Nazarite*, not only by *purpoſely* touching a dead body, or *coming to it*, was unclean: But if any *dyed* ſuddenly by him, he was to bring his ſin-offering and burnt-offering to make atonement; which was to manifeſt by the Type *the purity God requires*, and his diſtaſte of any the leaſt likeneſs or nearneſs to any defilement of ſin.

Dwell and *dive deep* as ever thou canſt, into the *abounding* ſinfulneſs of every the leaſt ſin.

Thence *reaſon and ponder* with thy ſelf, what is thy *unſpeakable* miſery, that art guilty of a *whole lifetime ſins*, ſuch an innumerable company of ſins, in *thoughts*, *affections*, *purpoſings*, *ſpeakings*, *doings*; in *acts*, *ways*, *habits*, *and all thy heart evil* that hath ever dwelt in thee.

And if thou *wilt overlook* them, and not conſider them, thou ſhalt be judged one day for them all. To methodize *this grand Inquiry and Soul-ſearch*, and to have the kindly iſſue in a due awakening, *ſtrive to avoid all confuſion of thoughts*, *and to do it diſtinctly*, *and in the* beſt affecting manner thou canſt.

Rules of Art are not here neceſſary to be uſed, but the *way of thy beſt skill*, by Gods aſſiſting, thou canſt take to *ſet an edge*, and give more efficacy to this undertaking; thou mayſt *ſingle out firſt* that ſin or luſt which dares and pinches thy ſpirit moſt; touch firſt where thou art tenderеſt and ſoreſt; on that which *items thee* moſt, *flaſhes fulleſt*, like Lightning in thy face, makes thy heart *ofteneſt ake*.

It's the counſel of ſome great Divines, to pitch upon

upon some gross sin first; *seek ease first* where thou art disquieted most, or that is likely to give the first blow. The Scriptures set sinners to consider their doings, *especially their ways*, which are *continued doings*. These should more humble than *meer particular acts*; but both acts and ways should be viewed, as they can be recalled and brought to mind, and then put all into the scale to make down weight, and contribute to fuller awaking.

But above all *sinning any*, or divers sins, *into ways*, and then walking these ways *into wonts*, those worst defilings and *soul-enslavings* of cursed habits; *such as habits of sensualness* and intemperance, *habitual covetousness* and worldliness, *habitual pride* and presumption, self-exalting, self-seeking, *habitual vanity* of thinkings, and such like. These *great chains* thou art bound with and enslaved by, *Tit.* 3. 3. *Serving divers lusts: Lusts served are sins formed into habits.*

These old *rooted soul-diseases*; these *heart-gangrenes* should *well be eyed*, and much awaken thee. *O it's sad to find thy self going to Hell in a custom and by a habit, binding thee and haling thee thither.*

To all, as *highest aggravations*, add the consideration of *that sin of thy Nature*, that *emptiness* and deprivation of all spiritual life, power, image of God and his glory, conjunction and communion with God and all happiness; with cursed *inclinedness* to all the sin in kinds and aggravations, that the whole World, Hell, and all, ever acted, or can act for ever.

And *that blackest piece of Hell* dropt into thy heart, the worst, very worst thing in Satans heart, that enmity and *horrid repugnancy*, crossness and contra-

contrariety to all the *extenſiveneſs* and dimenſions of whatſoever is good, is holy and righteous; yea that *higheſt monſtroſity* and *tranſcendency* of impiety; enmity to that God that *gave at firſt*, and ever keeps up thy being; and which is *the height of that height*, the utmoſt venom Hell could hatch, and heart can breed, *that horrid enmity to the very Being of God himſelf.* Before Grace, no guilty ſinner but *wiſhes God were not*, and if he could, would dethrone and deſtroy God utterly. And above all yet intimated, take in the *ſuperabounding ſins againſt the Goſpel*, neglectings and refuſings of the only remedy and relief of an undone ſoul, which is the *greateſt poſſible ſoul-wronging*: *Prov.* 8. 36. wiſdom affirms it, *Sinning againſt me*, ſaith Wiſdom, *he wrongs his own ſoul.* All ſin wrongs; but the meaning is more: he wrongs *with the greateſt poſſible* wrong, the higheſt can be done, to refuſe Chriſts Salvation. And which is yet *far exceeding* all ſelf-wronging, there ſin *ſo touches* the very apple of God eye, ſtrikes ſo provokingly at *his very heart*, and daſhes *down his moſt darling deſign*, the utmoſt and higheſt that he ever went, *or will go*; the higheſt exalting of the *riches of infinite free Love* and free Grace.

I have heard by a *good Hand*, that one of the Dukes of *Muſcovy*, while he ſtood talking with a poor Peaſant of the Country, *pitcht a Spear* he held in his hand, *upon the poor mans naked foot*, there digging with the point of the Spear into it, and the ſlave (for ſo they are generally) durſt not complain.

O! Goſpel-ſins *dig not into* the foot, or hand, or eye of a God (if I may ſo ſpeak) *but into his heart, and the very top and crown of it.* Every ſin againſt the Goſpel, *kicks ſo* at the very bowels of God, ſo diſhonours

diſhonours him in that his tendereſt, upper intereſt, *as nothing can* higher offend, and therefore not expoſe to deeper danger.

For farther help, *take the Book of Conſcience*, thy *Souls Regiſter*, and God Remembrancer. Look over all the *black Items* there on the File, that it will certainly one day produce, and ſet before thy face.

For *yet ſurer aſſiſtance*, take the perfect Rule and *Glaſs of the Law* and Word of Chriſt, therewith duely comparing thy life and frame of heart, that by the *Laws coming, ſin may the more abound.*

O but the Law, not only diſcovers guilt, but denounces a *moſt dreadful curſe*. Gal. 3. 10. *Curſed be every one that continues not in all things written in the Law, to do them.* And as the Law, ſo the Goſpel curſes with a *more dreadful curſe* for not obeying it, in true coming to Chriſt by Faith. O what a curſe muſt this then be, *to be accurſed* firſt for original corruption in all the *helliſh wickedneſs* of it: And then to *be curſed* for all thy innumerable actual trangreſſions. *Accurſed for the firſt act of* ſinning. *Accurſed* for the next act. And for every new ſin to have a *new ſentence*, be under a new curſe. For every, *every evil thought*, every evil *affection, purpoſe, word, work, every commiſſion, every omiſſion, every day, for all the ſins of it, to be accurſed, from the beginning to the end of it. Really* by the curſe, to be *ſeparated* to evil, bound over to death eternal in Hell. How ſhould this ſtartle and awaken thee?

O but there's yet that is more dreadful, to be continually for ſin, under the *hot diſpleaſure* and abiding wrath of a God. *Pſal.* 7. 11. *God is angry with the wicked every day.* Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him.* This God, ſo angry

angry for ſin, how *infinitely able is he* to take revenge, and *how reſolved is he*, unleſs thou turn to him? O what is that death eternal, that Hell provided to puniſh ſinners!

How *frail is thy life*, by which thou art kept from falling into the Lake of fire and brimſtone?

How *certain is thy death*, and how uncertain is thy dying time? It may come in a moment, and then thou art caſt upon eternal ruine.

Conſider, thy ſins, *after commiſſion*, grow not leſs, *wear not out*, are not leſs dangerous. *Sin is the ſame for ſubſtance, though thy ſenſe of them be leſs*; we greatly deceive our ſelves herein, as if ſin, the longer after commiſſion, were leſs; but the *guilt* of ſin is the ſame, the *defilement* the ſame, the *curſe* againſt them is in the ſame force, the *wrath*, diſpleaſure, and reſolution of God to revenge them, full out the very ſame, and *Gods remembrance* of them is ever the ſame. *Hoſ.* 7. 2. *I remember all their wickedneſs*; and how is that? *They are before my face. If they are not before thy face*, as God can ſet them, *yet they are before his face*, *Pſal.* 50. 21. 51. 9. that is, ſeen and remembred as a thing ſet full in a mans eye, and his eye full on them.

I have *been too bold in* thus enlarging. O 'tis hard to *awake* from the deep ſleep of ſin. But this muſt be endeavoured all thou canſt, and God he is to be *entreated* to help and do this for thee. There muſt be an *awakening by conviction* really and undeniably, ſeeing and acknowledging thy moſt woful condition.

Conviction in the underſtanding muſt end in *contrition*, and a working down to the affections: In a fourfold affection, anſwering a fourfold diſtemper.

1. Upon Fear. 2. Sorrow. 3. Deſpair. 4. Deſire and care to be eaſed.

1. To *tame preſumptuous boldneſs* and confidence in thy coming *to fear*, that for all thy ſin and danger feared not. As it is ſaid in that particular caſe, *Jer.* 36. 24. Though ſo great ſinners, and ſo ſeverely threatned, yet were they not afraid, but burnt the Roll. To *ſay we have ſinned* is not enough, there muſt be real *pungent fear*, *Acts* 2. 37. pricked at the heart on ſight of the ſin of killing Chriſt, a real and deep fear, to a wounding, piercing the heart *and thick skin* of ſecurity, hindering the feeling of a woful ſtate, coming to be as really ſenſible as thou *doſt in aſſured* and great danger, *Act.* 16. 29. the Jaylor *came trembling*. God by his Spirit, the *ſpirit of bondage*, *works this fear*, *Rom.* 8. 15.

2. There muſt be *a daſhing* the uſually carnal *jollity and mirth*. *Jam.* 4. 9. *Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and joy into heavineſs*: this all the Scripture calls for. A man condemned to dye a cruel death, if perſwaded he muſt dye, will *not laugh* and be merry, but mourn.

That mirth uſed at other times, is not to be uſed now.

3. To daſh *the deceiving, uſual, carnal hopes* which are the *houſe built upon the ſand*. Hopes of ſalvation on no *true* bottom, but *fond phanſie*, meer *imagination*. There *muſt be deſpair* as to all *worthineſs* and ability in a mans ſelf, or any creature, or in God and Chriſt hoped, as many do, in a falſe way, *Deut.* 29. *Pſal.* 50. *Acts* 2. 37. *What ſhall we do!* implies, as I take it, (beſide other things) deſpair of what formerly they hoped and truſted on.

4. To *curb and cure careleſneſs* and a *not deſiring*

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any other condition than their preſent: or an only cold, as it is in many, and *a fluctuating deſire*; there muſt an edge be ſet upon deſire, an *earneſt great deſire* to be eaſed of the trouble and burden of ſin and Gods wrath, *Acts* 16. 29. *What ſhall I do?* and *Acts* 2. 37. *What ſhall we do?* implies an earneſt deſire to be eaſed. And accordingly there muſt be an applying thy ſelf to *all the ways thou knoweſt*, and *going to others* that can adviſe thee. *Praying eſpecially* oft, and as *earneſtly* as thou canſt. *Confeſſing* and *bewailing greatly* thy preſent condition. Upon being truly awakened, and thence made really ſenſible of thy ſo woful ſtate, weary and heavy laden. After the *firſt diſpoſitive Meditation*, and the impreſſions made on thy heart through the Lords help, then a ſecond Meditation muſt *next be mightily intended*, and diligently followed, Meditation on *the means and manner* of uſing them, for getting out of thy ſo ſad eſtate, and coming to a ſafe and happy. As he, *Acts* 16. *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?*

Here *muſt be laid at the bottom* of this work that ſo neceſſary conſideration, *That none can help himſelf*, and attain the mercy of a God in a meritorious Saviour, unleſs *God the Father by his Holy* Spirit, the mighty Applyer of Chriſts Redemption, *draw efficaciouſly* the weary ſinner to the ſoul-eaſing Saviour, works faith to come, and reſts on an all-ſufficient Chriſt.

The *firſt ſtep* in this great ſoul-concern, muſt be labouring *to divert the eye from a total or too much* viewing of ſin and Gods wrath, and earneſtly endeavour to *be duely deeply poſſeſt* of the infinite *mercy, love, riches of free favour* in Chriſt, in whom he is *placable*, and infinitely willing to ſhew mercy.

1. *Willing*, in that he hath, in his abounding wiſdom and prudence, contrived the way of Reconciliation in Chriſt, *Eph.* 1.

2. *Willing* in infinite love and riches of grace, he *appointed* his own only Son, *anointed* him with all fulneſs of grace, *ſending* him, and cauſing him to work and procure *Redemption* perfectly in all reſpects, and then in *making the moſt free*, imaginable, and poſſible proffer and tender of Salvation in Chriſt.

A diſcovery and tender in the *exceeding great and precious promiſes*, promiſes that are as ſo many *ſtrong yernings* and *loud ſoundings* of the bowels of a God to ſinners; promiſes moſt firmly fixt, as being all *the ingroſt particulars*, and *the golden clauſes* of the Covenant of Grace, ſigned and ſealed with the moſt precious blood of Chriſt, *and therefore ordered, and in all things moſt ſure.*

The Promiſes and Covenant, are by moſt highly demonſtrating (that hardly to be believed and truſted to, by once awakened ſinners) that free rich love of God in Chriſt: by demonſtration of it, the *intendment* is firſt, to *found and breed* faith in weary heavy laden ſinners, *and after* to build it up and perfect it.

Meditation ſhould *firſt fix* upon the promiſes of *free juſtification* and pardon of ſin; and as humbling ariſes not from *a confuſed general* apprehenſion of ſin, or many ſins, but *diſtinct particular viewings* of particular evils: ſo comfortings and coming to relief, muſt be by *ſingling out and pondering* the promiſes of mercy *in particular*. As a drowning man that ſcapes by a taking hold on a particular thing, hand, or cord.

But the thing, the greateſt and higheſt for breed-

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ing and founding juſtifying faith, is firſt pondering the infinitely all-amazing and *adored free* love of God the Father, *Joh.* 3. 10. 1 *Joh.* 3. 1.

1. This is that *ſo rich Mine*, out of which the moſt *precious* Corner-ſtone Chriſt himſelf was taken.

2. For principally *glorifying this riches of* free grace, the *Earth* for a Stage was ſet up to begin the diſcovery and revelation of it.

3. The *great Aſſize* of the great day of Judgment is chiefly appointed for higher manifeſtation of it.

4. And *the higheſt Heaven*, with the ſtate of Glory there, is purpoſely *founded and conferred* on the Saints, for the *higheſt demonſtration chiefly of free ſaving grace*; not *Angels glorification*, but *redeemed Saints glorifying, is for free ſaving graces greateſt glorifying, and higheſt exalting.*

Dwell here, till *largeſt apprehenſions* and *higheſt admirations* ſwallow up and *drown* all thy fears, doubts, and diſcouragements, *raiſing* thy ſpirit up to hope, truſt, and conſolation.

But this ſo infinitely free love of the Father, muſt be *connected* with moſt wiſhly viewing and moſt earneſt pondering the *higheſt proof and evidence* of it, in that *greateſt poſſible gift*, Gods own Son, God in our Nature. *Joh.* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that*, &c. Here *after all thy* black and ſad thoughts and diſquiets, is the richeſt, ſtrongeſt, and *ſureſt Cordial* for a fainting heart. *A Chriſt in whom all fulneſs of wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption dwell*; That out of his own infinite love, became man, was in the *form of a ſervant, performed* the whole Law, *pacified* the wrath of God, *purchaſed* perfect and eternal life, by *laying down* his life a ranſom. 1. A *Chriſt freely offered by*

God the Father, *Isa.* 55. *Come and buy without money.* 2. *Freely offering himself,* Joh. 7. 37. *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.* 3. *Freely offered,* and to be taken as the Bride and the Spirit say, *Come and drink of the water of life freely,* Rev. 22. 17. This free grace must be *applied by the promises* of grace and pardon *more especially* and first. *Christ is not offered by God the Father, and the Lord Christ offers not himself, nor the Holy Spirit offers not, neither draws to Christ, but on the ground of the promise of forgiveness and salvation. Nor can it be taken by man, as a learned Divine expresses it, but* mediante promissione.

The promises *particularly must be pondered* duely, often and often.

Ponder 1. *The goodness* of them, they are good, sweet indeed to a needy thirsty spirit.

Ponder 2. *The sureness* and firmness, by a God that cannot lye, *Tit.* 1. *All yea and Amen in Christ,* 2 *Cor.* 1.

Ponder 3. *The freeness* of them. Nothing so free as they that come only from a God, only for his own Name sake.

Ponder 4. *The seal* of them, in the rare and abundant *examples* recorded for encouragement of sinners of all sorts, received to mercy. So 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. *I,* saith the Apostle, *was received for a pattern to them that hereafter should believe to eternal life.*

The promises must be pondered, *prayed often over,* as those which are for the *wounded, weary,* and heavy laden, to *breed faith*; not only to *feed* it, but *found,* and *feed* it also; to *begin,* and to build it up. Never *leave pondering* the promises, Gods love, and Christs fulness offered in them, until *pondering* comes

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to *hope*, *hope to thirſting*, *thirſting to higheſt prizing*, *prizing to ſelling all*, *and buying the Pearl*, till thou comeſt to *renouncing* thy own righteouſneſs, thou *caſts thy ſelf* upon God in Chriſt, by the promiſe firſt reſted on, promiſe leading to Chriſt firſt, and to God by Chriſt; and not only Chriſt for *juſtification* as thy Prieſt that purges guilt, and makes atonement, but as thy Prophet and King for light and holineſs, for a *new heart*, a *new principle*, a *new wiſdom and power*, a quickning power, from Union and Communion with Chriſt, *Rom. 6.* by the *inhabitation* and *operation* of his Spirit; by *faith*, *that hand* that receives all from Chriſt; when by faith thou art juſtified and ſanctified, and receiveſt by influence from Chriſt a living principle. Now *thy heart* is put upon the *right hinge*, for *rightly performing* holy duties, praying, reading, hearing the Word: *And now thou canſt meditate aright*, *in a holy and happy manner*, with *wiſdom and ſome skill*, choice of will, complacency, and conſtancy. And now *Meditation will proſper* in thy hand. Now as *Davids* bleſſed man, *thy delight* will be in the Law of God, and in *that Law* thou wilt meditate day and night. I have been longer herein by much, then was my intendment; come we to the next Directions.

CHAP. X.

Of Directions for Meditation, respecting such as are young Christians newly converted.

Our next *Work*, after Directions to those that desire to successfully practise holy Meditation, having formerly neglected it, is to *treat* of the Directions for *young Christians*, who are but *entered* upon their way, how best to order their right principle received, to their best advantage in this way of Meditation.

1. Here, as the Rule of *learned Physicians* is, in curing of diseases, that *universals* are first to be intended; So first your Rule is (to *enter* and *engage* your selves into that great Road, and most ordinary work incumbent, of daily Meditation) herein to contend and strive after an *habitual holy frame*, to *habit* thy self as thou art able, to the *right daily* Meditation.

1. *Habit and accustom* thy self to the mornings Meditation, in awaking so *still* with God, in serious *thinkings* of, and *admirings* his goodness and mercy in the night past.

Begin to *accustom* thy self to *first looking up* to God, and that most seriously and earnestly, that so near as may be, God *ever* may be the *first* in thy thoughts. *Psal.* 139. *When I awake, I am ever with thee.* And *Psal.* 5. 1. & 3. *Give ear unto my meditation----- In the morning, O Lord, will I direct or set in order*, as the word properly signifies, *and look up.* He awaked into Meditation, and acted that Meditation, in lifting up his heart in praying. To

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improve holy thoughts and holy desires, Gods being ever the *first* in our thoughts on awaking, is *certainly* more his due and proper right, than any other things in the world.

It is also the very *best thought-bestowing*, the best laying out our precious thoughts for our own profit; best as to the *help* and furtherance of grace; best for *fresh incomes* of sweet peace.

When first we act Heaven-ward, we act *freest* and *freshest*, when the spirit acts upward, before *lusts* and corruptions are *stirring*, before *Satan* begins to interpose, and before the *world* comes in to us, to hang on its weights upon our hearts.

It is far more *acceptable* to the Majesty of the high God, to have the *first visit* and homage; likewise more *beneficial* to our selves, to *get the start* of other things, to give our hearts first a heavenly seasoning.

The *vessel* will be the *sweeter*, and retain an after better savouriness for the coming day, when this is well and seriously done. *Visit God early, and he will visit us early.* This awaking *will occasion the Holy Spirits awaking and blowing on the garden of thy heart for the spices to flow.*

2. Come then to that Meditation relating to the duties of the *succeeding day*, this then must be well attended for making a good entrance into this new course of Meditation.

1. Here *to strive after the true wisdom* of this way, to be an Artist in some measure, a *wise Meditater*. At the first we cannot be too wise, nor understand too well a way new begun. Nor never can we here be so wise for doing any part of our spiritual work, but we may learn more.

2. To have a due *temper of warmth*, fervour, and viva-

vivacity, this muſt be minded, *Rom.* 12. 11. *Fervent in ſpirit.* To begin a *courſe dully*, act eaſily, and not earneſtly, this wrongs thee much, it hinders the *otherwiſe obtainable facility of doing*, with that *rare ſweetneſs* attending a holy ſeriouſneſs, and the *rich improvement* of the main ſtock, that ſtock of grace given for increaſing. A habit comes not up by *remiſs* actings, but by *earneſt* actings. Cold water cannot be made *boiling* hot, and kept ſo, by adding *luke-warm water*, but water very hot. *Eaſie actings* will *diſintend* and abate the habit, where attained; and hinder the attaining, where aimed at. *Eaſie endeavours* will ſetle in a *ſpiritual lazineſs*, *ſet up at a formality*; but equal and earneſt, will *introduce* a ſtrong habit and high.

Get the *habitual fervency* by daily actings of heat, and being fervent in every doing. So when the Apoſtle urges fervency of ſpirit, he means a fervency in all *ſerving* the Lord at all times.

3. As you muſt do this in reference to *daily* Meditation in the general way of it, ſo *habit* and *accuſtom* thy ſelf to meditating of thy *chief* and *ſupreme* end.

To a due and earneſt meditating of God, and glorifying him; for this gives the *Laws* and *Rules* to all thy courſe. If the queſtion were, *What is the beſt* thought ariſing any time in any heart, it is that *which* is of God, the glorifying of him.

The *pureſt* higheſt thoughts of a God exalting him, *muſt needs excel all other thoughts*, more than the *Sun* excels all candles or leaſt lights whatſoever.

Uſe thy thoughts with *David* and other holy men of God, to *bear ſtrongly*, and act ardently upon this. This lays *the foundation daily deeper of thy ſelf-denying*,

ing, *Mark* 8. 34. that ſo hard and tough work.

Self would not *riſe up and float ſo high* in any good heart, if glorifying the *infinitely better God were more meditated daily upon*, and had its more *due* and *down weight* in the ſcales of the Chriſtians thoughts, had more ſerious muſing upon.

4. Habit *thy ſelf*, gain upon thy ſelf as to ſerious daily Meditation on the *next end* and ſcope, thy own eternal happineſs and ſalvation.

Let not this ſo *momentous* concern want its weight in thy daily meditating; let it have ſtill *ſome at leaſt* ſerious pondering: and this *not only at thy firſt entrance* upon this way of daily meditating, then when thy fears and *feelings of wrath* remain *freſh* in memory. But here is the Art and frame to be endeavoured, to *grow up in more habitual ſeriouſneſs* of muſing on this great ſalvation.

This was the bleſſed Apoſtles way; he *not only at firſt* when Chriſt humbled him, began it, to meditate how to be ſaved, but *eyed it daily*, accuſtomed himſelf into ſerious, more ſerious minding it, *Phil.* 3. 13. *I forget things behind, and preſs to the mark.* He kept his *conſtant* aiming, and aimed better, ſtill more fully, and therefore *the act being ſtronger, the habit muſt be more intended.*

The habit of meditating here, ſhould not *ſink*, and be in a conſumption, decline, and grow weaker, or but keep up alive; but it ſhould *root deeper*, put forth ſtronger, ſhoot up higher to the mark. Salvation ſhould have *quicker* and more *lively impreſſions* on us, like the *natural* motion, though ſlack at firſt, yet quick at laſt.

That's more natural and genuine which grows ſtill ſtronger, like *rich wine more ſtrong* and ſpirit by keeping cloſe.

5. Contend

5. Contend *to habiting thy ſelf* to ponder thoſe particular means making up to the grand ends of glorifying God, and thy happineſs in enjoyment of him for ever. Namely,

1. Accuſtom thy ſelf to as *high and tranſporting thoughts of Jeſus Chriſt*, his fulneſs of grace freely offered, and thy *daily putting him* on more, and growing up in him. And this by *Meditation of the precious Promiſes and the Faith*, whereby thou muſt through them, receive from Chriſt, and live by it,

2. So accuſtom thy ſelf daily to Meditation of the *Holy Spirits* dwelling and operating in every good heart, without whoſe aſſiſtance thou canſt not perform any good; therefore muſt not be *neglected, grieved, quenched, reſiſted*, but *prayed for and cheriſhed, earneſtly expected, and highly entertained.*

3. Accuſtom thy ſelf to ſome *ſerioufneſs* of thoughts of the *Ordinances of Chriſt*, the ways of our Communion with God (we have no other means for it) and the walks wherein the Spirit comes.

4. Uſe to caſt a *wiſhly eye* on all ſuch conducing things, formerly mentioned, as thou canſt have opportunity.

5. Look to *well enter into, and fix upon the Meditation, daily examination, of review, looking over matters of the day*; and if *hindered at any time, help it by after-induſtry.* I ſay the Meditation of *Review* in the cloſe of the day, to ſee, and judge thy ſelf as to thy hearts frame, and thy carriage in the time of the day.

This at the firſt is like the working with an *Awk-hand*; this muſt not be *ſlubbered* over, ſlightly done. But being harſh and unpleaſant work at firſt, thou muſt ſo manage it in care and conſtancy, that thou mayſt

mayſt *gain a hand at it*, it may become eaſie and pleaſant. *Suarez* a Jeſuit ſays of himſelf, that his times of *ſelf-reflection*, and examining his conſcience for matters of the day, were the *ſweeteſt part* of all the day.

Thy Rule muſt be to perform this work, ſo as it proves *eaſier and ſweeter*, and thereby thou improveſt in it.

The more *impartial and ſincere* you are in it, the ſweeter you will find it. The *more accurate and exquiſite your inquiries and heart-ſearchings are, and the more impartial towards your ſelf, the ſweeter peace, the higher boldneſs and confidence will thy heart be filled with. For this brings in the clearer evidence of thy ſincerity, thy impartiality.*

Nothing *perfumes* the ſpirit of a Chriſtian with ſweeter peace and more heavenly joy, than a *clear diſcovery of the hearts uprightneſs and integrity*, which by ſearching our hearts, and *impartially judging* them, we attain. As *Pſal.* 26. 1, 2. David prays, *Judge me, O Lord, for I have walkt in mine integrity.* And *Pſal.* 139. 23. *Search me, and ſee if any way of wickedneſs be in me.* This came from his own firſt impartial ſearching, and finding his ſincerity. *Uſual and diligent ſelf-ſearching* brings in, and keeps up a ſetled peace and confidence, by a *mans* being daily more aſſured of *ſincerity* and heart-uprightneſs.

Be careful therefore and diligent in this ſelf-ſearching.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Directions for particular Cases of young Christians, how they should do therein.

BEsides these more general things, last mentioned, I must next come to the Rules of Meditation, as to thy particular case and condition.

Here, that thy Meditation must pitch upon, will be either,

1. The *Case of thy assurance*, either wanting, and not yet attained, or else weak and feeble.

2. It must be *something relating* to sanctification, thy weak grace, and many imperfections here, the purging of thy heart from divers evils, *subduing* of new rising and stirring corruptions; some *particular sin* that haunts and troubles thee; some *temptation* which follows thee; some *cross* or *affliction* lying heavy upon thee: or any other *particulars* wherein thou art concerned, here to meditate how to have help the best and speediest.

1. That is a principal point of wisdom, to study and ponder the *case of thy peace* and *assurance* of Gods love and favour, if not yet obtained; or but enjoyed in a small measure, accompanied with divers doubts and fears; to *meditate* how best thou mayst come to assurance, and be strong and stablisht in it.

How to have thy *good condition* made out to thee, and thy fears, discouragements, and doubts may scatter and be driven away.

Here *thou must be willing* to take pains, and resolve

ſolve to exerciſe *very humble patient waiting*, Pſal. 27. 14. *Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, he ſhall ſtrengthen thy heart; wait, I ſay, on the Lord.* Pſal. 130. 4. *There is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayſt be feared.* 5. *I wait for the Lord, my ſoul doth wait.* 6. *My ſoul waits more than they that watch for the morning.* I ſay *humble patient* waiting, until by frequent ponderings and ſearchings, thou art repleniſht with ſuch a furniture and treaſury of *Scripture-grounds*, Goſpel-*reaſons*, and inducements; and *theſe ſo full* and clear, as thy heart now changed by the gracious help of the Holy Ghoſt, who *aſſures* by the Goſpel-promiſes, arrives at the *skill* and wiſdom, as to be able to anſwer thy own cavilling doubting ſpirit; and to repel the *falſe reaſons* that Satan uſes to hinder thy peace and aſſurance. Aſſurance is chiefly bottomed on our ſanctification aſſured. So Divines ſay, aſſurance of Election, Juſtification, Perſeverance, and Glorification, cannot be without aſſurance of Sanctification, this being the ground of our aſſurance in the other four.

In *particular* thou muſt labour to draw forth out of the ſure Word of Chriſt, the *infallible Characters* & clear deſcriptions and evidences of the new creature, and of *ſincerity* of grace; then meditate and ponder ſo duely upon theſe *ſure* evidences and right Scripture-deſcriptions given of the new Creature and ſincerity of grace, as to *come* to as clear and diſtinct an underſtanding of what is held forth to thee as thou canſt. I paſs divers things might be mentioned, and ſhall touch on the following.

1. As that *change* and *renewing* of the mind and judgment, which in reſpect of *ſin*, is to have it out of meaſure ſinful, *Rom.* 7. 13. The *greateſt evil* in all

all the world, as that only contrariety and emnity to the greateſt good, namely the *infinitely bleſſed God*, his infinite holineſs and purity, and all his ſo infinitely glorious Attributes; yea *his very Being*, with his Soveraignty and Government; *all his* moſt holy, righteous, and good Laws, and Word, the ſignification and demonſtration of his Soveraignty over us, and of his will concerning us. Hereby likewiſe manifeſting the *extreme injuriouſneſs* and unrighteouſneſs in ſin, in regard of God, whom upon infinite and indiſpenſible obligations we are engaged perfectly to obey.

And as the *abounding* ſinfulneſs of ſin muſt be ſeen, ſo as the judgment *diſallows all known ſin*, the very leaſt; ſo there muſt be *an univerſal liking, and an allowance of all good*, of all known Truths, and all known Duties; *Truths* as revealed by God, and to be believed by us; and *Duties* commanded by God, and to be performed by us.

2. *In ſeeing the fulneſs*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. of beauty and excellency, with the mightineſs of Chriſt to ſave in all reſpects, all that come to God by him by faith, with *the vanity of all earthly* things to make us happy, and *the excellency of Grace*, Holineſs, Faith, Love, and the other required heavenly graces and ſoul-abilities and beauties above all other endowments. This is the firſt part, the firſt right change of the mind and judgment, 1 *Cor.* 2. *Whereas the natural man knows not the things of God, nor can he, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.*

2. The next part of the new Creature, is that change and new heavenly frame of that *noble faculty the will*, Rom. 7. 18. *To will is preſent.* Oft in the Pſalms *David* mentions his *will*, his choice, his purpoſe,

urpoſe, his firm and *rooted* reſolution, *Pſal.* 119. 8. *will keep thy ſtatutes.* Verſ. 30. *I have choſen the way of truth.* Verſ. 106. *I have ſworn, and will perform to keep thy righteous judgments.* Iſa. 56. 4. *That chuſe the* things which pleaſe, Gods own deſcription of a gracious frame of ſpirit, by a gracious choice. Contrary, *a ſinful unconverted* heart is deſcribed by *chuſing things* that are ſinful and provoking. I ſay the *change of the will* is a high evidence of ſincerity, a *chuſing of God* for our God, *chuſing of Chriſt*, his offered grace, above all him to our Righteouſneſs and Juſtification, our Wiſdom, our Sanctification; to *coming to*, taking of, truſting on him, is *an act of the will*, in chuſing him, a chuſing the holy ways of God univerſally, *Pſal.* 119. *Reſpect to all thy commandments.* This not ſo much in *knowing*, as *purpoſe of heart* for keeping all.

To add but one thing more. The new Creature is principally ſeen in *a new will*, and *a new will in a new aim*, altering *utterly* that old, ſinful, carnal aim, of *carnal ſelf*, and ſatisfying of it, ſinfully aiming at only or chiefly ſelf, and ſatisfying ſelf in worldly and carnal things. This Idol *Self*, *the grand aim is taken down*, is no more the ſouls *Maſter-mark*, that gave all the Laws, made every thing ſerve to it, and end in it; eyeing of *ſelf* chiefly, aiming at, ſeeking and ſtriving moſt for ſelf, is *changed*; and there's a *new Maſter-aim*, *a new mark* to which it deſigns, and principally drives at, God and his glory, ſerving and pleaſing him. This evidently appears in the Saints in Scripture. They *exalt God*, called ſuch as ſeek God, ſerve God, *live to God*, to Chriſt, *Pſal.* 22. 26. *Pſal.* 24. 6. This the generation of them that ſeek him, and deny themſelves: *Rom.* 6. 11. *Alive*

unto God, 2 Cor. 5. 15. *Live not to themſelves, but to him that dyed for them.*

1. Univerſal *allowance* of all known good in the mind.

2. Univerſal *abhorrence* of all known evil; chuſing all good, and an univerſal purpoſe of will, to pleaſe God in all things, are the things the ſincerity of them ſtands of thoſe two noble faculties renewed.

3. A real change of the *corrupt*, *carnal*, and diſorderly movings of the *affections*, to a making them holy and heavenly, to ſetting them on the things *above*, and *taking them off* really the things below, from their uſual ſway, rule, violent running to carnal and earthly things, and from their cuſtomary and predominant deadneſs, flatneſs, and remiſſneſs to and in ſpiritual and heavenly things.

A change *really upon the great* and leading affection, love the great *weight* that carries all; *Amor meus eſt pondus meum*, as the devout Ancient ſaid. My ſouls love is my ſouls weight, the ſtrong biaſs that ſtill leads it. *Hence ariſe the other holy affections, they are acted from love*, deſire, delight, ſorrow, fear, hatred of all known evil, *Pſal.* 97. 10. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil*, Pſal. 119. 104. *I hate every falſe way.* A Character it is of a wicked man, *he abhors not evil*, *Pſal.* 36. 4. But a *holy heart* when it comes *even new out of the furnace*, is new caſt, new made, it's *ſtampt with predominant love to God* and his ways, and with *new ſelf-loathing* and ſin-abhorring, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *A new heart will I give you.* Verſ. 36. *Then ſhall ye remember your evil ways, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight for your iniquities and for your abominations.* I ſhall add no more particulars. The truth and ſincerity of this whole

whole work wrought firſt in thee *really*, and then known, muſt be the ground for evidencing of thy *aſſurance*, which muſt be done by comparing the *pattern* of the new Creature, deſcribed in the infallible Word of Chriſt, *and the copy of it drawn in thy heart.*

Such *ſerious ſearching* and due meditating with praying and other ordinances, muſt be on thy part; thou muſt, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. *Give all diligence to make thy calling and election ſure.* But withal there muſt be a due *conſideration*, and *praying* for the evidencing and ſealing Spirit of Chriſt the Comforter, and diligent ſtill attending upon thoſe ways and means of grace the Holy Spirit uſes to come and ſeal and comfort in.

I know *other things might be mentioned*, eſpecially in a *purpoſely handling* this Doctrine of Aſſurance. The manner of Gods working in ſuch as are *effectually* drawn to Chriſt, differs in *circumſtances*, and in the ſenſible *perceivings* of it, accordingly as God pleaſes to work: and aſſurance, as the Spirit pleaſes, is given in a different way.

But trying by this *change* upon the heart in a *renewing the mind*, ſubduing, and turning that great wheel of the ſoul, the refractory and *ſtubborn will*, changing the main aim from ſelf and the creature to God in Chriſt. Really *plucking up the affections rooted in the earth*, and finding them ſet upon things above; an evident change and turning the *grand affection of love out of its old channel*, and a placing it upon God, his Word, ways, and people, the Saints above all other things: when theſe things *freely given thee* of God, and *by the Spirit of God received, are made known to be in thee*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. this is a

right assurance. *O pray, pray for this sealing* and assuring Spirit, this will *help* thee against the fears, doubts, deceits of thy own heart, and Satans methods, and clear up thy good condition to thee.

This assurance attained, the next *Meditation* must be of the *best ways* of keeping and preserving it, which must be *endeavoured*; yea, of thy growing up to the *riches and fulness* of assurance, to a Plerophory, as it is called. The preserving of assurance, and growing up in it, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. must be by care and diligence used about it, and used for exacter walking in all Christs ways. Endeavours of *mortifying* thy corruptions, *combating* with Satan and the world, and getting victory, *Rev.* 2. 17. *To him that overcometh, I will give him a white stone with a new name.* The *white stone* is thy Justification, the *new name* is Adoption of Sons, both assured upon victory obtained.

There must be a *tender care* of obedience to and *compliance* with the Holy Spirit, and of not grieving of it. *Eph.* 4. 30. *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption.* If thou wouldst have the *Holy Spirit* a *sealing Spirit*, thou must not be a *Griever* of that Spirit, by any ordinary *neglectings* and slightings of it, or by *contrary* walkings to it; wilful and *presumptuous evils* especially provoke and grieve, and will hinder assurance. *Psal.* 85. 8. *God will speak peace to his Saints, but let them not turn again to folly.*

This in *David*, *Psal.* 51. 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones thou hast broken may rejoyce.* Some Saints by their *falls* have *felt* it long, it may be *ever after*, as great bruises in the body. Others upon *care* and *fruitfulness*, have kept their peace

peace and assurance long, *it may be to the last.*

CHAP. XII.

Of the next Meditation, namely, how weak and imperfect thy Grace is.

THis is a *Meditation* very necessary for making thee very *humble*, greatly fearful and careful, and highly to *provoke* thee to contend to a growth and strength of grace, to be *rooted* and stablisht daily more.

When a soul comes to look and search into himself, sees what little *grace* he hath; what abundance of corruptions, and in what power they shew themselves. When he finds how he is *assaulted* by Satan, and *ensnared* by the world, and things of it, he sees how *necessary* it is to consider what in this case he is to do. This therefore after assurance in some degree obtained, and how to keep and increase it, may well be the matter of Meditation.

Meditate then of thy *grace received*, the weakness and imperfection of it, and how to help and strengthen it, especially thy *Faith*, that great *fundamental Grace*, that serves as the *eye* to see Christ, the *foot* to come to him, and *hand* to take him, *lean upon*, and to take and receive from him.

In the case of *weakness of grace*, thy Meditation must be upon that purposely *conferred fulness*, *Col.* 1. 19. that fountain-fulness, which is in Christ to whom by faith thou art *united*, engrafted into him, to *partake* of the *sweetness* of this Vine, *Joh.* 15. 3. of the *fatness* of this Olive, 1 *Cor.* 1. 31. *He is*

made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification. 1. *Meritoriously*, so he hath purchased these. 2. *Efficaciously*, he imparts and communicates these. *Joh.* 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing*, without first a real *ingraffing* into Christ, *Joh.* 15. 4. without a *vital influence* from him, and without a *new continual* acting trust, and recumbency on him. But *Phil.* 4.13. *I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.* Consider thou must, that he will *help* thee: If Christ did first help thee, *when thou wert a stranger* and enemy to him, *now much more* will he help thee, being reconciled: If when thou hadst no union, wert no member of his, he made thee a member; much more being a member will he supply life, strength, and growth to make thee a *perfect member*: he must make his body in all the members perfect at last. They must *grow* therefore, that he may be a head perfected, in all his members perfection.

The way Christ will teach thee, seeking to him. The work Christ will work for thee, trusting in him.

2. Then as thy Meditation must be of Christ the Well of living waters, and his fulness, so (because the Well, though a *living Spring*, yet it is deep) how to come at it, how to draw. The next Meditation therefore must be of our *means vouchsafed* us to draw, and of particularly that, by which all the Saints, in all Ages, have drawn out of this Well of Salvation, and received grace for grace.

Therefore this Meditation must be of that *precious powerful Faith*, whereby Christ is received; *initially*, by our first union and communion with him; and received also *gradually* daily, and for our building up to perfection in him, Meditation must be, as of Faith, to fetch supply from Christ.

3. So

3. So of the way *Faith* hath to act, namely, by the precious *Promiſes of Sanctification*, in which Chriſt aſſures thee, he will not *break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax*, Matth. 12. 20.

That the Kingdom of Heaven at firſt is as a *grain of muſtard-ſeed, but it becomes as a great tree*, Matth. 13. 31, 32. *That the good work in any heart God will finiſh to the day of Chriſt*, Phil. 1. 6.

Thou muſt repair to the rich Treaſury of the Goſpel, gather up *the Pearls of Promiſes* ſcattered all over it, *ſtring them up* in Meditation, and ponder their *infallible Truth*, abundant *Goodneſs*, and moſt tranſcendent *Freeneſs*.

4. Next thou muſt meditate duely of the way for the *full Breaſts of the Promiſes*, to give down into thy *longing ſpirit*, their ſweetneſs and help. This is by Chriſts *appointed Ordinances*, praying, and the reſt, wherein thy Faith muſt act upon the Promiſes, and by them upon Jeſus Chriſt; and ſo, though that *Well be deep*, Faith is thy *Bucket*, the Promiſes the *Chain*, the Ordinances the *Hands* to let it down, and draw it up, filled with living water for thy thirſty ſoul to drink.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Meditation of Corruptions ſtirring, and oft prevailing.

THis Meditation muſt proceed upon the Promiſes of *ſin-ſubduing and mortifying. Mich.* 7. 19. *He will ſubdue our iniquities.* Rom. 6. 14. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* A man under the Law, *it gives no ſtrength* againſt ſin, *Rom.* 3. 20. It *diſcovers* ſin, and *irritates* ſin, *Rom.* 7. 8, 9. but gives no ſtrength to ſubdue it. But being under Goſpel-grace, that *gives power* to mortifie ſin. *Thoſe that are Chriſts, have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts,* Gal. 5. 24. *They are dead to ſin, Rom.* 6. 2. by Chriſt, purchaſing the *total mortification*, and dead by an *Initial* and begun ſanctification, that from being implanted into Chriſts death, and his ſin-killing grace, ſin receives its *deaths wound*, and ſhall *bleed to death* upon it. But this by applying frequently the promiſes of mortification, *exerciſing* Faith by them, *exciting* Faith to reſt on them. Let us therefore, as for other caſes, ſo for this, gather up *variety of promiſes* of ſin-ſubduing.

Let thy eye in Meditation go *from promiſe* to promiſe. Firſt, *ſet one promiſe* before thee, and dwell upon that, *look to Chriſt in that*, and thence draw help from him, reſting on him, for making it good to thy ſouls caſe, and then *go to, and dwell upon another*, ponder that, and reſt again upon Chriſt in that promiſe, and ſo ſucceſſively upon others.

Thou

Thou haſt *great varieties* of Promiſes, that thy eye in Meditation might be more *delighted* in walking in *this Garden of Chriſt*, among theſe pleaſant ſweet flowers; and that Faith might *by the variety* feed more to the full upon them.

In the caſe of a *particular corruption*, ſometimes, yea, it may be often too hard for thee. Thy now Meditation muſt paſs in a *more particular manner*.

In *great pondering* of the *ſinfulneſs* of this ſin, as the Scripture in the divers paſſages of it, ſets it forth, in the kind and nature, in the degrees, aggravations, and abounding ſinfulneſs of it.

1. In the *terrible threatnings* denounced againſt it, which diſcover Gods not dealing tenderly, and handling it as it were gently. What *David* ſaid of *Abſalom* in his rebellion, & warring againſt him openly, *Deal for my ſake gently with the young man Abſalom*, 2 *Sam.* 18. 5. that we are ready to do, with applying the *Threatnings* to our corruptions, loth to apply him *too hot*, and *too home*, and let theſe *Corroſives* continue their time, becauſe of their ſmart and pain: But we ſhould both get *ſtore of threatnings*, give them all the *edge* we can, apply them *cloſe*, and let them *ſtick faſt*, and *ſtay their juſt time*, to iſſue in due fear and awakning, and make thee more willing to forego thy ſin.

The *Threatnings* of the Law, and Word of Chriſt are of *great neceſſity*, and uſe for godly ſpirits, ſo God and the Saints in Scripture uſed them for humblings, awaknings, and reformings.

2. *This ſins ſinfulneſs in Examples.* In the *Examples of ſeverity*, recorded both of wicked and godly perſons, Gods ſeverity to them, yea *Examples* of ſometimes *high and amazing ſeverities* againſt ſins

ſins lookt on as *low and little* in their nature, God cannot *over-puniſh* any the leaſt ſin here. The higheſt ſeverity is lower, and far beneath the Hell due for the leaſt ſin. O let Meditation apply all the *Engines*, diſcharge all the *great and ſmall ſhot*, give it all the *broad-ſides*, and *Thunders of Threatnings* of wrath, death, and Hell, *ſpit flames of fire* in the face of this ſin; get *all the ſtrongeſt Arguments*, higheſt *Incentives*, with all poſſible means and ways to help in this caſe.

When a Ship hath ſprung a Leak; when the Sea hath made a remarkable breach, men preſently run, ſtudy, and apply all poſſible ways of ſtopping it.

When thy ſoul hath *ſprung a leak*, that will certainly ſink thee, without due help, in time uſed.

When the *Sea of ſin* hath made a *dangerous breach*, ſpeedily uſe all effectual means to heal it. Faithful Phyſicians, when a Patient is endangered by that diſeaſe which is a caſe of *great difficulty*, how do they ſtudy and ſtrive, with utmoſt Art and induſtry, to cure it? When it is a *great Soul-caſe*, of moſt dangerous diſtemper; when a *Tendency* to great miſchief; when a *high Diſadvantage* to peace, comfort, ſtrength, growth, fruitfulneſs, there ſhould be both *haſtening* and *heightning*, utmoſt intending of thoughts, care, induſtry in all poſſible ways. Do it to ſave *heart-ſmart* and *hazard*. Do it *to ſave God a labour* of uſing ſharper means, *ſad, ſoaking, long, and abiding* trouble to make thee conſider, make thee willing to part with that member, that *right foot*, or *hand* or *eye*, whatever it be. Ah! but above all, take that *higheſt inducement*, and ſtrive to be the greateſt, moſt induſtrious and *exquiſite Artiſt*, in ſelecting ſweeteſt, ſtrongeſt, and moſt efficacious Goſpel-arguments

ments for *aggravating* thy ſin, and looſning thy heart, *unſoddering* it from that ſin that cleaves ſo faſt.

And let the *Maſter-piece of all* be the deep and great ponderings of the ſo *aſtoniſhing* and *amazing coming*, and *humblings* of the Lord Chriſt, all his abaſings, the deepeſt that ever were; all of eſpecially his ſufferings, his agony, apprehenſion, and by betraying, his arraignment, condemnation, deriſion, buffeting, ſpittings on, ſcourging, and crucifying, with the weight of the wrath of God, and his withdrawing for a time, and then giving up the ghoſt. All theſe *unparallel'd Sufferings* from *moſt inconceivable* love. Lay this great *abaſing* home to greatly humble thee; This *ſoul* exceeding heavineſs, to work thee to ſuitable ſorrow; this *Blood* ſo precious, to *warm thy heart*, to melt it, and work it to willingneſs, to leave this ſin, that more peculiarly ſpilt it; this blood of God, and his life that he *laid down* for it; to thy *free laying down* of it, of this peculiar Chriſt-killing ſin.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Meditation, in reſpect of Temptations and and Aſſaults by Satan.

4. THere is thy Meditation and conſidering, in reference to thy caſe, as *tempted*. It may be thou art under *ſad Temptations, frequent and fierce, dreadful* and *horrid things injected*, that make thy heart ake and tremble, that amaze and confound thee,

thee, that haunt thee, that thou haſt no freedom or quiet, that *ſtorm thee* ſo violently, thou knoweſt not what to do.

After peace and aſſurance is obtained, and power alſo in ſome good degree gained, the Lord ſometimes lets Satan looſe, in ſeveral ways, he in infinite wiſdom judges fitteſt for moſt holy purpoſes, as referring to himſelf and his own glory, for moſt gracious ends, as reſpecting his own children, their ſpiritual great good. If thy caſe be thus to be tempted, it *may be very ſorely aſſaulted*: Conſider that now thou art not to be *ſcared and diſturbed*, as at a ſtrange thing, unuſual with Gods Children, though new to thee.

Thou art not to be *ſadned and dejected* with ſorrow and diſcouragement, not *diſturbed* and confounded, as neither heart, nor head, reſolution or reaſon, grace or experience, counſel, or any thing can help, and be effectual.

1. But now, one excellent and proper way in this caſe of ſudden diſturbances, from ſudden aſſaults, is a turning from thy *imaginations*, thy *ſudden* and *ſhort thoughts* that are *raiſing hurries*, violent paſſions, and diſturbances in thee; to endeavour *ſerious and deliberate thinkings*, to do what in us lyes, to check *imagination* and phanſie, and haſty apprehenſions thence flaſhing, and flying like ſparks from a blazing matter; and to let the *Sun-ſhine of reaſon*, ſerious and *religious reaſon*, put out the *fire* and *candles* of phanſies and imaginations; to quench and ſlack their heat and haſte. There is *nothing* our fooliſh hearts are apter unto, then theſe *ſhort ſudden* thoughts, flaſhes, and haſtineſs, without *heedings* and ſtay.

Haſti-

Haſtineſs of thinking comes on us as Lightning ſometimes on the dry *thatcht houſe*, ſets it inſtantly on fire, and comes as *Lightning with an after Thunder-clap*, ſtrikes all into fears and confuſion, ſhivers and ſcatters all confidence and conſideration, into ſuch confuſedneſs and diſcompoſure, that nothing at that time will prevail with us. Like the Sea, when a ſtrong wind hath raiſed the billows high, it rages and roars, and cannot ſuddenly reſt.

The way in all caſes of troubles by *ſudden apprehenſions* and ſhort thoughts, is to help our ſelves by thoughts of *depth* and *length*. *Depth of ſeriouſneſs*, things ſoaking firſt into thy mind. *Length* alſo of abode and ſtaying with thee a *fit ſpace of time*, that allowance of time which a *ſerious* and weighty thing ought in full to have.

Thus the *relief of Temptations* working diſcompoſing impreſſions, from Satans ſudden and thick dartings, and our ſudden receivings in imagination and ſhort thinkings, and thence coming quick upon the minds, paſſions, and affections, *muſt be ejected by contrary ſeriouſneſs*, and time-taking in thinking.

Until we can in *ſome ſort* ceaſe to be *ſudden, ſhort*, and *haſty* in our apprehenſions, until *phanſie* and *imagination* ſway leſs, and *judgment in ſeriouſneſs* and pondering prevail more, that we are *habited* and accuſtomed to wiſely weigh things that come into our minds, Satan will be *too hard* for us, by *making our haſtineſs our hurt*.

This was one reaſon of *Davids* miſcarriage, when he under temptation in *Pſal.* 116. he tells us, verſ. 11. *He ſaid all men are lyars*. But he found the reaſon, it was *in his haſte*. His being *foil'd* by the temptation, was by the *haſte* of his ſpirit in *imagination*, thought

thought *too ſhort*, too ſudden, and paſſion was ſtirred too ſoon. He did not ponder what promiſe was, and the experiences he had to ſtay him. Thus the bleſſed Apoſtle *Peter*, whom *Satan winnowed*; he *came thick with his darts* of temptation, *Peter was too ſhort in conſideration*, which made him ſo *ſudden* in fear; and that occaſioned his *fall*. If he had uſed ſuch conſideration, as led him to repent afterward, had uſed *conſideration* in the time of tentation, he had not been led into it.

Thus Divines give the account of that *fall* that ruined *Adam* and all his poſterity. He did not duely conſider; *he acted imagination and incogitancy*, not wiſdom and prudent pondering.

This was one way the Apoſtle uſed in the caſe of temptation by affliction, *Heb.* 12. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. They *conſidered* not, but were too haſty, too forgetful, and therefore ſo diſcouraged at the Croſs. Therefore he endeavours to bring them to conſideration, to extinguiſh *ſhort apprehenſion* and ſudden thoughts which occaſioned fears and diſcouragement.

This is a *right way* to relieve diſquiets from any ſudden imaginations, and from the ſubtil quick dartings of Satan. Let that which comes ſuddenly be thought on *ſeriouſly*, viewed over and over.

Creatures *apt to ſtart* and fright, as Horſes young and of high metal, we bring them *cloſe to the things* they fright at, make them look on them oft, and touch them, that time and looking may teach them not to ſtart. If temptations were entertained not with *ſudden ſhort thoughts* and imagination; but with *abode and ſerioufneſs* of thoughts in conſideration, this would much advantage us in times of temptation, and diſappoint Satans deſigns.

2. And

2. And this leads us to *another effectual way*, and in part illuſtrates the former particular, namely, that help *of diverting the mind*, earneſtly ſtriving when ſuggeſtions and injections charge thee, to *think* quite another way. Take in *good thoughts*, and be as earneſt and intent as thou canſt, that Satan may ſee thou *art not at leiſure*, haſt no mind to parley with him, there's no room for ſuch a gueſt, the door is barred againſt him.

This is a good Rule in Reaſon, to make a *diverſion* of the thoughts; when any thing troubles us, and proves a diſturbance, a *diverſion* is the cure. When Satan comes, thou haſt ways *enough* for thy *thoughts to divert* by things of excellency in abundant variety, to *entertain* and *detain* with the higheſt pleaſure and ſatisfaction, thy moſt ſerious thoughts.

3. But *another help*, and that our Lord Chriſt hath taught, when Satan would tempt him: *flye up to Heaven by prayer*, Mark 14. 38. *Pray that ye enter not into temptation.* When Hell riſes up, arms and charges againſt thee, this is ever a ready help, to flye up to heaven, *to charge him*, complain of him, and call for the help that's *ſtronger* than Satan, the *mighty Spirit of Chriſt*, againſt that malicious Spirit. Prayer is a both *rare diverſion* of thoughts, and *a piece of Artillery* that will do execution moſt effectually, and never fail, if in faith and fervency. He fears nothing more than *prayer*, and *feels* nothing more. If he can diſcourage prayer, he triumphs. But as our Lord, when in *an agony he prayed more fervently*, and *had an Angel ſent from Heaven to ſtrengthen him*: So if thou art in an agony, a ſad buffeting of Satan, *pray more fervently*, and *an Angel from Heaven*, yea the God that is the ſtrengthner will help *againſt this Angel from Hell.* Medi-

Meditation in this case of Temptation must be ordered by *Scripture-rules*, by having such apprehensions of Satan and his temptations, as the Scriptures (which hold forth the sure Notions and Considerations of things concerning our spiritual state and affairs) as that teacheth. Ah! when we are *guided by our own Notions* and conceits, Satan will be too hard for us by his subtilties, methods, depths, and deceits, which he hath and practiseth. He can *outwit us, far out-reason us*, when we have never such *parts and perfections of reason* and learning, and all *humane accomplishments*.

But when we take the Scriptures for our *only rule*, then have we *the most sure and supereminent wisdom*, the *infinite wisdom* of a God against the *narrow* wisdom of a creature, the *infallible wisdom* of a God against the *falshoods and lyes* of a creature. *Eph.* 6. 16. The Apostle bids *take the shield of faith to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one*. No shield is proof, and large enough to cover us, and quench his fiery darts: But that of the *Doctrine* of Faith in the Scriptures, *held forth by the grace of Faith* in the holy heart; this will do it.

This was the way *the Captain of our Salvation* used when Satan *so boldly* tempted him. He might have dealt *divers ways* with him, and at first sight dasht him. He might have told him, *it would be utterly* in vain to tempt him; It *was impossible for him* to prevail; *chid him* for his audaciousness, to assault the Son of God. *Reasoned with him*, and *disputed him* quite down. *Ruled him*, and *commanded him* out of his presence so pure and glorious, as he so often afterward rebukt him, restrained him, and dispossest him out of so many.

But

But he only lookt to the *Scripture*, uſed and held forth the Scripture, and nothing is recorded elſe: *Three darts* the Devil throws, *three different temptations* he uſes. Thoſe three ſome of the Learned, (which in 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. are called the *All in the world*) 1. Senſuality, in that, *Make theſe ſtones bread*, to feed thee. 2. Pride, in that, *Caſt thy ſelf down*, to preſume proudly. 3. Covetouſneſs, in that, *All theſe will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* He tempts him to covet all the Kingdoms of the world, contrary to contentedneſs with his preſent poor condition. But the three darts of temptation are quencht with the uſing a *threefold Scripture*; ſo Satan is diſappointed, and goes away ſhamefully beaten. Beaten *by only uſing* this Weapon of the Word. The Word muſt be thy help in all caſes of temptation.

1. The Word as thy only *ſure directive* and guide for all right conceiving of Satan and his temptings.

We muſt not *miſ-apprehend, miſ imagine* Satan and his workings. As we muſt not *frame any falſe imaginations* of the moſt bleſſed God, ſo we ſhould not frame in our minds *any falſe imaginations* of Satan and his temptings of us. But this we do, and muſt do, when imagination goes alone, and takes not the Rule of Scripture, *but takes* the fond and feeble principles of a *dark* and deceitful, and of a *daſtardly* and ſlothful ſpirit, loth and unfit to combat. *The Notions and diſcoveries of Scripture are our ſure way of help.*

1. As what the Scripture *infallibly manifeſts* Satan to be; as to his nature, he is a Spirit, *but not a God.* He is exceeding *wiſe* by nature, crafty and very ſubtil by long improved experience, *but infinitely* (O

Christian) below thy God. Though he *hath a depth* of policy; yet he hath not the *Master-reach*.

Though he hath a *very extensive* and an abounding experimental knowledge in many things, and knows men, and *much of particular persons*, can look far into them; yet hath he not the advantages which the *Heart-maker*, and the *Heart-searcher*, *Jer.* 17.10. and the *Heart-knower*, 2 *Chron.* 6. 30. the only Heart-knower. He cannot see with *any direct looking on*, and *into any heart*; but he sees by *an indirect eying*, guessing and gathering by *circumstances*, and *going by consequences*, and not by infallible arguments. Both indirectly and imperfectly also it is he knows any heart, and the workings of it.

2. As *to his power*, though he be mighty in strength to make *impressions* upon elementary natures, and *things belonging* to men, as houses, goods, cattel, any enjoyments of such a sort; and *upon bodies* and lives of men, when *God pleases* to permit him, as we have it most evidently in the 1. & 2. of *Job*; yet he hath not *such power* to work upon the souls of men, as to *destroy them*, or to disturb them, or to discern and discover their hearts, their *thinkings*, *affections*, *aimings*, or any actings of the reasonable soul. Neither can he *hurt the soul*, either to destroy it, or to *defile* it, or to *force* it, to think, or affect, or purpose. He can *force no man to sin*, in the least *commission* of evil, or *omission* of good.

He cannot *perswade*, terrifie, or trouble, without first our giving leave, and giving way. He gets ground by our *first giving ground*; he leads when we *let him fasten his chain*, and draws when we suffer our selves to be drawn. *Jam.* 1. 14. *Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and is enticed.*

Satan

Satan *caſts forth the bait*, but we *firſt catch it before* he catcheth us; he cannot *make us* take in the bait, no more than the *Fiſher* can force the fiſh to bite and ſwallow his bait; he *tenders* only, and the *fiſh* takes it of its own accord.

Satan can *throw* his dart, but it *cannot enter*, unleſs we will; if we will *yield*, and not encounter with our arms, but walk unweaponed, and not fight.

3. Though Satan hath the *greateſt gall*, deepeſt, and moſt highly improved hatred, of an *irreverſible edge*, boiled up to the higheſt *Hell-dyed implacableneſs*; yet this Serpent is not ſo formidable, as the infinite love of God to thee is *comfortable*. What can his *malice* weigh againſt the *goodneſs* of thy God that endureth continually?

4. Though Satan be unweariedly buſie and ſedulous, yet he is not, cannot be ſo *induſtrious*, careful, wakeful, working for thee, and diſpoſing all things for thy greateſt good, *Rom.* 8. 28. as thy God is. He never can *out-do thy God*, his doings againſt thee, cannot *out-do* thy Gods doings for thee: No not in any *heat* or height of any temptation.

When he tempts thee, buffets thee, haunts thee, he *muſt not be look't upon* as one *at full liberty* to do what he liſts. He is not the *Ruler* of all things, governs not the world by himſelf alone. *But he is under thy God then when he tempts thee*; yea, thy God *governs the very temptation.* Satan can caſt out no more of his ſerpentine venom than *thy God permits*. He caſts not out one drop or the leaſt quantity, without thy Gods firſt giving way.

5. As thy God governs by ſtill giving Satan leave, and limiting him when he tempts, as he limited him in *Jobs* caſe; ſo his *letting Satan* tempt, is not *for*

him to have his will, but that thy God may have *his own holy will*, both to teach thee, and better thee much, to ſupport, encourage, and yet humble much thy ſpirit, that thy God ſees is needful for thee.

Though temptations are like fire to *melt* the metal, yet not to *mar*, but mend it, to purge it, caſt it into a new mould, that it may be poliſht and brightned, and ſo fitted more for thy Gods praiſe.

Though the *beſt Phyſicians* ſometimes *uſe ſevere* and ſharp remedies; yet the trouble, pain, ſickneſs cauſed by Evacuations, Corroſives, Cauſticks, Cuttings, and ſuch like, are not intended for themſelves, but for recovery, ſoundneſs, ſtrength, and the good of the Patient, though at preſent he may not ſo like or believe it. So is it in thy Gods ſuffering thee to be tempted ſorely, and long buffeted; and this muſt be conſidered and believed. Thy Gods ſuffering thee to be tryed, is *only for gracious ends*, which after the *temptation* is well over, will clearly be ſeen, and thankfully acknowledged.

Ah! thou wilt ſay, *I could not have* been without this temptation or theſe tryals, in this *nature, manner, meaſure, ſo ſharp, ſo long, ſo many*. Never had my *experiences* been ſo rich, my *Faith* and truſt, love and cleaving, hope and waiting, humility, patience, courage, contentedneſs, and other graces ſo appeared, ſo improved, *acted ſo high*, to the praiſes of God, and reflected and brought in ſuch peace and joy to my own boſom. Ah! how out of this evil God hath wrought my good? Out of this roaring Lyon this *eater brought meat, out of the ſtrong ſweetneſs*, as Samſon *of the honey found in the Lyon he vanquiſht*, *Judg.* 14. 8.

6. Though Satan be ſuch an *enemy*, and his moleſtations

leſtations ſo great; yet *Meditation* muſt gather up the *reliefs* and encouragements the Scripture ſupplies thee with. All diſcouragement ariſes much from a *ſingle*, or too much pondering and poring on a preſent evil, *without* a due looking to the means of relief, eſcaping, or enduring. Therefore Meditation here muſt, 1. *Eye God as well as Satan*, his love, faithfulneſs, pity, power, and all things making for comfort. 2. The purchaſe of Chriſt buying victory by his blood. 3. The preſence and help of his Spirit againſt the evil Spirit, and the defence he will be ſure to make of his own houſe and Temple, and the things of it, to ſave it from harm.

7. Laſtly, thy Meditation muſt *look up*, and labour to write after the copies of the Saints, that have *courageouſly* combated, and *glorioufly* conquered, eſpecially upon thy *Captain* General, who overcame not by his meer *infinite* power; but by means at hand, and ready *always* in thy power. By the Scripture I have ſingled out *a few things* on this occaſion; whole books, ſome leſs, ſome very great have been written very learnedly and experimentally of the Doctrine of Temptations, wherein large direction and help may be had for ſuch as are tempted; but I have rather exceeded already, and therefore will add no more in this particular.

CHAP. XV.

Some Directions as to occasional and set Meditation.

SOme Directions might be next inserted, concerning that Meditation used *on special occasions*, and which is more therefore solemn, and at larger leisure. As in the Law, besides the daily Sacrifices, there were particular *solemn times*, where the work was much more; *more Sacrifices* offered, *more Rites* observed, and time spent in those Services was more. This Meditation must be performed according to the nature and scope, and such Rules as best godly wisdom can suggest for it.

1. As choice of the *fittest season* and opportunity, doing it when we are *freest* from avocations, and *fittest* as to frame, temper, and strength of body; when we are *livelyest and freshest*, and not sunk, tyred, dispirited; that the good and *lively* present temper of body may the better help and assist the soul, and the soul thereby more orderly and vigorously, more *intensly and deliberately* act.

2. Chusing the *fittest place*, is a prudence and great advantage for avoiding *disturbance* and interruptions; and to have the *golden thread of Meditation* run smoothly on without breaking from any diversions. *We must in faithfulness* to our own *spiritual interest*, wisely watch, and strongly resolve to put by every thing that may divert or disquiet us in our now intended Meditation.

A *darksom place*, or that is purposely made some-

thing

thing dark for avoiding distractions from the eye, and to be better *composed*, more serious and intent, is a good furtherance to Meditation, if we are not timorous, and apt to fright. *Isaac*, *Gen.* 24. 63. *went out in the evening to Meditation.* It may be the duskishness of the time might be *part of his purpose*, because he could less see about, which the *lightsomness* of the day would not so suit.

All things which prevent *scatterings of the thoughts*, and *abate seriousness*, which may *conduce to intending* the mind, and quicken to the duty in hand, should *so well as we can*, be considered and applied, until by *frequent practice*, we get *a hand at this work*, that thou *provest an Artist* in it, and *arrivest at a heavenly habit*, to work readiness, easiness, and constancy in doing it.

The Prophet, *Psal.* 108. 1. saith, *His heart was ready*, so the old Translation hath it; the new Translation, *My heart is fixed.* The word in the Hebrew signifies *first ready* or prepared. Then *secondly* it signifies fixed. We first fit, prepare a thing, sharpen it before we drive it into the ground, and then drive it in and fix it. So act seriously and often, that thy heart may be ready, and may also be fixt, and this by a *habit* which brings readiness and fixedness, as in other holy duties, so in this of Meditation.

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CHAP. XVI.

Of Directions, in reference to short and ejaculatory Meditations.

1. HEed here must be taken, *that neither* these short and quick actings of the soul in ejaculations *prove exclusive of the more serious and solemn*, or *take off from it*, from *either the daily Meditation*, or *the solemn occasional* formerly spoken of: Nor that *we lay more stress* upon *these short and frequent dartings* up of the heart, than upon our daily Meditation, or the other; that this short thing be not made *to stand for all, or almost all else meditating*.

The heart of the best person, is a *deceitful* and slippery, an *inconstant and fickle*, a dull and slothful piece, *under a lothness* to do good, especially that which is high and hard, *that comes not off* easily, and that which must have time, a space, and good proportion of time. This we are ready, at least in our hearts, to call *tedious*, and think too long; although there be but *bare allowance* of so much time as the very necessity, for the well-doing the duty requires. As naturally a *slightness* and shortness to have a serious duty quickly over, pleases much; so a *tang* of this, yea too much of this *carnal hastiness* is in the best. Any spiritual performance we would *oft* have over before *it be on*, and get into the heart, before it be warm in the heart, kindle it, quicken it, draws it up to Heaven, and hath its efficacy and real ends.

Things that are *hard*, and work *trouble*, we are ready quickly to call tedious, and because other *occa-*

sions

ſions may call *loud*, our corruption *preſent* hath an *itch* for any duties being over, *ended ſo ſoon as begun.*

Therefore thou muſt look this ſhort, ſooner over work, *get not ground* of the other more ſerious and ſolemn Meditation; *that a help* convert not *it ſelf into a hindrance*; that it *juſtle* not out the ſolemn, or rob it of its due.

Holy duties are to be all *Links of the ſame golden Chain, Pearls* all *ſtrung upon the ſame ſilken thread*; the *greater* muſt not keep off the leſs, nor the *leſs* the greater: Both muſt have their juſt allowance of place, come all *upon* the thread, make up the chain entire, and be all our helps in their *connexion.* Holy duties muſt not claſh, not be their *own hinderers* by oppoſition, one ſet againſt another; or *derogating* one from another. But as the *noble parts* in the body, and the *meaner parts*, have all their ſeveral places, offices, uſes for the good of the whole; yet with *their diverſity act not contrariety*, but *a ſweet harmonious ſubſerviency* mutually to each other, and to the whole.

2. Neither muſt this ſort of Meditation be *ſlight* and *remiſs*, grow into, and ſetle *in a meer cuſtomarineſs* and formality. It muſt not on the one hand *ſhut out* the more *ſolemn* Meditation; nor on the *other hand* fix in an eaſie and ſlight performing. But muſt have its true and *ſpiritual, warm and lively acting* with reverence, care, pure aiming, to have heart, for the ſhortneſs of time, to aſcend up to Heaven, *making a ſhort viſit*, for meeting with ſome ſoul-refreſhing, by a ſight and taſte of the pleaſures and delicacies *ſet ready for all* that travel this road of heavenly Meditation.

We

We muſt look it be a right work, how ſhort ſoever; that it be *the uſe of our ſpiritual Archery*, from a right principle, *to take a true aim* at the mark, flye round up to it, *by acting* ſpiritual skill and ſtrength, ſome wiſdom and warmth, *as the nature of the work* will admit.

That it be not a *flaſh*, *a fit of phanſie*, a meer cuſtom which *calls* on us, and carries us, but a *ſpark* of the holy heart-fire within flying up to Heaven.

3. This being *a ſhort viſit* made to Heaven, a journey of *leſs charge* and labour, and of a quick diſpatch. It therefore ſhould be done the *oftner*, and with greater frequencies.

From *friends that are near*, we expect more frequent viſits. *Common and eaſie things* we look to be done more conſtantly to us. What thing in the world is ſo cheap as a thought? What is ſo ſhort, and of ſo quick a diſpatch?

A *thought-viſit* is the *eaſieſt viſit*. God expects of us it ſhould be *frequent*, very oft; and reaſon urges to a greater frequency, for making up that which this ſort of Meditation muſt want of the more ſet and ſolemn.

As they ſay of gold, that it is found either in the Oar mixt, or in the lump and ſmall pieces (Pipins as they call them) but purer; or elſe in ſand and ſmall duſt, very pure and good. But the ſmall golden ſands, when they are many gathered, and put together, may make ſo large quantities for uſe, as that is found in the Oar, or lump and greater pieces.

Many *golden ſands* of precious ejaculations will amount to much, and help to make a Chriſtian rich at laſt. Though *great gains* in trade fill the purſe ſooner, when ordinary; yet light gains when thick,

will

will make a heavy purſe alſo at laſt. I will add no more Directions for younger Chriſtians in their Meditations, having already exceeded. Now we muſt come to Directions for others.

CHAP. XVII.

Directions for more grown and elder Chriſtians.

1. YOu muſt *daily contend* to better eſtabliſhment and confirmation in this way and work of Meditation, *Pſal.* 119. 15. *I will meditate in thy precepts*; and verſ. 18. *I will meditate, &c. David* had *formerly meditated*, accuſtomed himſelf to this rare practice, was not now to begin to reſolve or do. Therefore *his meaning muſt be* a fixing his reſolution and purpoſe ſtronger. The Apoſtle *Paul* often for the eſtabliſhment of thoſe he wrote unto, prays earneſtly, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 17. *Stabliſh you in every good word and work*, in every duty of godlineſs.

The beſt Chriſtians, and moſt eſtabliſht in their way, have always need *of more eſtabliſhing*, as to their graces and frame of heart; ſo to their *duties* and whole courſe of godlineſs. There muſt be an earneſt care and ſtriving, as you have begun and practiſed, ſo to be ſtabliſhed. Not to begin, and then draw back, nor yield to do with a weakneſs, wearineſs, and unevenneſs; but here to ſay as *David* oft, *O God my heart is fixed, I will meditate.* Meditation is heavenly, but *hard* in it ſelf, comes off ſometimes harder. The beſt heart is a *ſlippery piece*, that ſometimes

times not only flags and falls low, but ſometimes alſo fails; the *purpoſe* within, and the *practice* without may have their ſtops and faltrings: The Watch may want a winding up. There may be failure in the practice, from a failing *in the purpoſe*, a fit of dying away may come upon thee, if there be not a conſtant care of ſtability.

A good mans heart muſt be like *Solomons* Temple with the *two Pillars ſet up* in it, *Jacin* and *Booz*, eſtabliſhment and ſtrength.

2. As thou muſt endeavour eſtabliſhment, ſo ſtrive for *improvement*. Growth is neceſſary both in Graces and Duties, as the Scripture ſhews.

1. There muſt be care to improve in the Art and skill of *holy Meditation*. To underſtand thy way better, *Prov.* 14. 8. *The wiſdom of the prudent is to underſtand his way*; not only with an *initial* underſtanding it, but a *progreſſive* underſtanding of it. Not only to know in the *ſame degree*, and to be always alike *at the laſt* as at the firſt, but to underſtand far better.

As the wiſe Artificer that contents not himſelf with the ſame meaſure of skill in his way, but to be a *better Artiſt*, proceed to a perfection.

If a Chriſtian be trading for Heaven in *good earneſt*, he will ſtrive every way to excel.

Not like a *Bungler*, that does in a poor pitiful manner, juſt to live and no more; but as an Artiſt, and *man of ingenuity*, to live plentifully.

I muſt *ſtudy how to ſtudy better*, to comprehend the *whole wiſdom* of my way, to live more fruitfully to others, ſerviceably to God, comfortably to my own boſom.

Not to only *juſt ſo much skill* as will ſerve to get *creeping*, but *for flying to Heaven*. 2. To

2. To learn how to *kindle a fire* in my heart, and do my work warmer.

Strive to more *affectionate Meditation.*

To have things have *a quicker passage* from the head to the heart.

That the ſpiritual things meditated on, come *ſooner to my heart*, kindle it quickly, and make me all on fire. *Rom.* 12. 11. *Fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord.*

It is not to be taken only for *real fervency*, but *growth.* He would not have them *no warmer* and fervent *at laſt* than at firſt: So Meditation ſhould *heap hotter coals* upon thee, make *thy fire a flame.*

This by Meditations applying warmer, and more heart-*quickning reaſons* and arguments.

We call motives (reaſons for doing a thing, a duty of Religion) Incentives. Meditation ſhould *ſtrike fire*, and blow it up into a flame.

Strive to have Meditation more *heart-warming*; not only to have it more *notional*, but *cordial*; not only a ſhining, but a burning light, as it was ſaid of *John Baptiſt.*

That's Meditation to purpoſe, when the *head* moves the heart, brings in light and heat alſo. The Moon-light is pleaſant, but the Suns is beſt, becauſe chiefly it is with *vivifical heat*, it is the worlds warmer. Therefore ſee, ſearch in Meditation for ſuch things, and manage them in ſuch a manner, as may warm thee *at the heart* moſt, make thee daily warmer.

1. Warmer in that *grand affection*, that ſtrong ſpring of ſpiritual operation Love; love to the work of Meditation, love to heavenly and ſpiritual things, the lovely, beauteous, and glorious things which

Medita-

Meditation brings and ſets before thee, to *highly treat and entertain thee.* Principally moſt inflamed love to the *higheſt beauty* and glory, for whom moſt peculiarly that beſt affection, the *beſt piece of thy heart* was made, the moſt bleſſed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2. Warmer *in ardency of deſire*, to keep in and improve in this heavenly way of Meditation, *Pſal.* 119. 20. *My ſoul breaketh for the deſire it hath to thy judgments*; which ſoul-breaking was for looking into them by reading, *reading* for meditating to preſent and ſupply new heavenly matter, that he might exerciſe himſelf there by Meditation, know Gods will, and be better affected, more reſolved and enlarged. That deſire ſo *earneſt* was greatly (among others) to be at that *his rare mind-exerciſe of Meditation, the beſt way of thinking* that poſſibly can be, none like this; thus had this holy mans chief heart-workings; nothing had that ſhare of conſtant ſeriouſneſs; here were his longings to breathe his ſoul up this hill; he *grudg'd* the time that gave ſtop or interruptions to this beſt *thought-work.*

3. Warmer ſhould Meditation be, as to *delight* and complacency, to not only burn and be fervent in love and deſire, but to *flame up* in joy and delight; more generally, men like a fire, beſt when it *flames.* The holy Prophet, *Pſal.* 119. 47. *I will delight my ſelf in thy Commandments.* Meditation in the word is the *holy hearts walk of pleaſure*, a broad large walk, *Pſal.* 119. 96. *Thy Commandment is exceeding broad*, ſo our new Tranſlation; *exceeding large*, ſo the old. We *ſo far live a duty*, as we act delight. When *David* ſaith he will delight, he meant not *the mixture of a meer drop*, or ſmalleſt ſpark of delight

delight ſhould be ſtirred up; but a great, yea growing delight. Delight in Meditation ſhould not only live and have a being, ſome moving; but ſhould *thrive* and grow. As every Ordinance ſhould prove a ſtill *greater pleaſure*: So Meditation ſhould prove a more *refreſhing ſoul-eye walk*, an aſcent from *delight to delight*, to higher delight, till we come to the *top* in raviſhments and higheſt attending admirations.

CHAP. XVIII.

Directions more particular.

1. WHatever thou *meditateſt* upon, let it not be only an *intuition*, or eying a thing, or a meer *recognition* or *remembrance*. Or if divers things come before thee, let not thy work be *a bare enumeration*, or as it were a telling them over, to be able to ſay, I have thought of ſuch and ſuch things in particular; but let it be a review with ſomething that *new* is, with ſome new conſiderations, *as thou art able*.

Something *freſh*, which may bring the better ſavourineſs and ſweeter reliſh, that may ſet a *better edge*, and quicken things more upon thee.

Meditation, though it be not for *feeding phanſie with curioſities*; yet ſhould be ſo ordered, as to ſeaſon and ſweeten, ſuit and prepare things to *more ſpiritual* delight, and to a larger perceiving of that *extenſive* and abounding ſavourineſs and excellency in holy things.

Every

Every Meditation should endeavour *a more exquisite preparation*, better still reducing things that we ponder, both to spiritual *advantages*, with *spiritual* pleasure accompanying.

To do this *most easily and effectually*, our way is to improve and quicken Meditation *by our gathering up* the graciously afforded *varieties* of Scripture-passages relating to those things Meditation is to be upon; gather the varieties of Scripture-passages about that *particular subject* you mean to meditate on.

The Scripture in the *diversities of passages* about particular subjects, is like a rich banquet, where are set before thee great varieties of rarities: There are all manner of subjects. All the *credenda* and *faciendu*, all things to be believed and practised in order to salvation. There are great varieties of heavenly *Truths*, for knowledge and wisdom, and right believing. Great varieties of *Precepts*, Rules, and Directions for due practice. Many *Promises* and many *Threatnings* to back the Precepts; sundry *Patterns* and *Precedents* to assist them, and make them (and thereby) the Precepts more effectual on us.

Oft in Scripture the same things are expressed in *a various manner*, in a different, *a new mode and fashion*, in *new trimmings* as it were, and new dressings, to both edifie and also please us. *Variety in expression carries oft variety of Notion*, holds forth something more to be learnt, and affords something that may *gratifie* our spirits, as to pleasure and delight.

So the same thing hath it may be *varieties of Arguments and Reasons* for conviction and demonstration, *Inducements* to perswade and lead.

Arguments and *Inducements*, with the *highest Art* of Reasoning, with the *best improvement* of Rhetorick and Perswasion.

Thus

Thus if thou meaneſt to meditate upon God, or Jeſus Chriſt, or the Holy Spirit, upon Faith, or Love, or any Grace, upon any duty, any ſin, any affliction: Thy way is to ſee what the Scripture hath and holds forth in the ſeveral paſſages of it; as concerning Faith, of the *Nature* of it, of the *effects* and properties of it, *priviledges* coming by it, *reaſons* to perſwade to believe, to live by Faith in all conditions; how great *variety* of expreſſions have you for all things relating to Faith, ſo of other particular ſubjects?

By this *variety* taking up one expreſſion after another, at ſuch *times as you can beſt*, how may thy Meditation be *carried on with great delight* and to great advantage?

This is one excellent way to order and improve thy Meditation, take *varieties* of Scripture-paſſages about any particular ſubject thou wilt meditate on.

1. For Scripture-*expreſſion* hath a bottom and foundation of ſure and infallible truth, which comes from God that cannot lye; *your Meditation goes on ſure ground.*

2. Scripture-expreſſions *are ſuited for us* by the ſo *infinite wiſdom* of a God, who knows how beſt to declare his own mind, and how beſt to *convey* and teach it to *our capacity and condition.* None can *ſpeak ſo to me as God in the Scripture doth.*

3. Yea Scripture-expreſſions are *ſanctified by God*, to enable us to ſanctifie him in this and all other duties. This therefore is *our beſt way* to feed on theſe rarities, this rich banquet of ſo great varieties, when we are to meditate. Hereby we may ever have matter abundantly to meditate; *never be to ſeek*, and for the manner, perform it with great

delight and pleasure, which will otherwise be a wearineſs.

This certainly *was the way of the* higheſt Artiſts in Meditation, *David* and other holy perſons upon Record in Scripture. They could not but *ſee the ſame things to be repeated, yet oft in a various way of expreſſion*; therefore muſt conclude, that the holy Inditer had his *wiſe intendment* in ſo various expreſſions. Therefore their *godly* wiſdom muſt teach them when they meditated, to go in that way the Spirits *condeſcending intent* led them: So let it be thy Rule, for thy *help* for to make thy Meditation pleaſurable and profitable together.

I will mention ſome Inſtances.

The Grace of Faith is thus variouſly expreſt.

By *truſting in God*, Prov. 3. 5. *Truſt in the Lord with all thy heart.* Iſa. 26. 4. *Truſt in the Lord Jehovah*; and in other places, *Pſal.* 37. 5. *By rowling our way on God.*

By *taking hold of Gods ſtrength*, Iſa. 27. 5. and divers others: In reference to Chriſt, by *ſeeing* the Son, *Joh.* 6. 40. *Coming* to Chriſt, *Matth.* 11. 28. And *believing* on and in Chriſt often. Love of God, *Deut.* 30. 6. *Love thy God with all thy heart and with all thy ſoul.* Deut. 6. 5. *Love thy God with all thy heart and ſoul*; and a third is added, *With all thy might. Mark* 12. 10. Chriſt adds to the three former, *With all thy mind.* Certainly theſe varyings *had their intent*; were that when we meditate of theſe or other graces, we ſhould furniſh our Meditation, and improve by them.

Thus things cited in *Deuteronomy* are *variouſly expreſt* from thoſe very paſſages and particulars in the former Books: So the *Chronicles* expreſs differently.

things

things in the *Kings*, and the *Four Evangelists* vary the expressions of the same things, both the *matters historical* and *doctrinal*; and all the Scripture over, this is practised. *Variety of expression calls for observation, and holds forth oft some peculiar Notion and Instruction.*

Let this therefore be thy Rule in Meditation.

2. Be sure frequently and earnestly to meditate both of thy *supreme and chief end*, and of the proper and proportionate means thereto conducing. But do daily something more to purpose in that great Meditation of the *supreme end*, as wisdom teaches, and being that in its nature which deserves the highest and first things; that also which gives *Rules* to all thy other actings and endeavours, that glorifying & exalting God above all. *Do very much* in collecting together, spreading before thee, well considering, acting the most *vigorous and intense* Meditation of all such things which may reduce thee to *higher apprehensions*, *warmer affections*, firmer resolutions, and more earnest and even *contendings* for glorifying him that is God, and there is none beside him; for him that only gave thee *thy all*, body, soul, life, and only preserves thy all. That *gave his only Son* to death, to save thy souls life. *His Spirit to draw thee* to Christ, or thou hadst never come. *To dwell and work in thee*, and do all for thee, as to applying Christ, and all fellowship in Christ, and with him, and hath so infinitely obliged thee. Therefore how sinful, how unworthy to not honour and glorifie him, how unkindly he takes it, and how it grieves him? Let Meditation gather up, and *industriously strive* to improve all it possibly can.

Ah! how that holy Apostle was looking and

ſtriving this way, *how near was this* glorifying God to his heart, how much in his eye and endeavour, how oft is he ſpeaking of it? How earneſtly doth he provoke all he had to do with, to it? 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *Whatſoever ye do, if eat or drink, do all to the glory of God*; acting all to it, muſt imply an always minding of it.

3. Lay *ſound ſtreſs* likewiſe in Meditation as to that thy *next chief end ſelf-ſaving*, to have more ſerious thoughts and induſtrious *preſſings on hard to work it out, and make thy calling and election ſure.* To work it out againſt all difficulties and oppoſitions, look more *earneſtly* up to Heaven, and into *Heaven.* And it is good when thou thinkeſt of Heaven; be then ſo bold with thy ſelf, and faithful to thy ſelf, as to lead thy thoughts to think of Hell, and ponder that place and ſtate, taking often the *weight of the crown of glory*, the *worth* of the Jewels of that Crown, and think in greater earneſtneſs of the Riches of that Kingdom of Glory, thy own *unſpeakable happineſs*, with that rare, rich, annexed Jewel *Eternity.* The loſing of it, is from not looking on it; moſt loſing it, from looking aſide to the world. The beſt *go but ſlowly to Heaven*, becauſe they mind it ſo remiſsly, and move ſo eaſily. A way, the beſt way to be the beſt *Marksman* at Heaven, ſhould be every Chriſtians great ſtudy. This is wiſdom for thy ſelf to meditate, *ſtudy thy ſelf into the Art* of winning the Crown of Glory. Weigh *Hell* and *Heaven*, unſpeakable, inſufferable, and eternal, eternal torment and wo, with inconceivable and eternal, never fading happineſs and higheſt glory. Repreſent more effectually, ſee, feel more *ſenſibly* the fearful and woful caſe of a *damned* ſoul, *realize* it with

with the beſt induſtry and Art thou canſt uſe, and be not *ſo ſinfully ſoft, nice, and tender* of touching, or of dwellings and ſearchings by this way of thoughts; *force thy ſelf* to feel the pains and ſcorchings of this Hell prepared, and the fulneſs of Gods wrath poured out; and then *repreſent* and realize to thy ſelf happineſs and glory, with thy *utmoſt* ability and induſtry, as if thou ſaweſt it in all the fulneſs, taſted it, and wert feeding to the *full* at Chriſts Table in his Kingdom.

There are *ſtrange Artifices* to get Crowns and Kingdoms. Ah! act Meditation into an ever-growing, more *covetous* of the gain, *ambitious* of the honour, *contentious* for to have the victory over all difficulties in the way of this moſt tranſcendent Crown of Glory.

The wiſe Merchant ſeeks and buys the Pearl, *Mat.* 13. 46. The wiſe Meditater weighs, ſtrives for, and wins the Crown.

3. Improve Meditation all you can, as to the grand and moſt *principal means*, be very *high and hard Students* for that *excellency of knowledge, the knowledge of Chriſt, and him crucified*, and better applying of him. To ſee daily more what a *way* Chriſt is to the Father, what *fulneſs dwells in him*, *Col.* 1. 19. how freely he is offered, how *mighty and ready he is to ſave to the uttermoſt*. Uttermoſt of *guilt*, by righteouſneſs and forgiveneſs; of *wrath*, by reconciliation; of *ſhame* and vileneſs, by dignity and adoption through his blood. To the uttermoſt of *darkneſs*, by being our light; uttermoſt of our *errours*, by being put on as truth; uttermoſt of *folly*, by being applied as our wiſdom; uttermoſt of corrupt affections and carnal aims, choices and diſtempers

of will, and sinfulness of the whole soul, by being our *sanctification*. 1 Cor. 1. 31. Yea to the *uttermost of all misery*, and to perfect felicity. Strive to meditate better, to have Meditation issue in a *growing knowledge* of Christ, *sweeter savour*, stronger *recumbencies* on him, *larger receivings* from him, more *intimate fellowship* with him, and a *more worthy* walking of him.

4. Let thy Meditation be more improved in that particular of the *great Applier* of Christ to thee, and mighty Helper of thee, the holy Spirit; how to better entertain him, and by obeying, please and delight him, and not *grieve him*; that he always may be ready to assist, enlarge, and comfort thee, seal thee, and shed abroad the love of God in thy heart.

5. Strive after a *better meditating* on all the precious *promises*, so as more to strengthen Faith, heighten Hope, and have the fuller Communion with Christ by them.

6. So meditate of the *Ordinances*, as they be more highly valued and endeared, and be more instrumental for thy meeting with God in them, and commanding his blessing by them, of light, warmth, strength, and encouragement.

7. *Mightily contend* to exacter musings and ponderings of thy *heart's great wickedness* and deep deceitfulness. Make Meditation a *better clue and thread* to lead thee *into all intricacies and windings* of that maze and labyrinth wherein thou art so ready to be lost, and art often lost. To know it more perfectly in all its cheats and deceits, but with an earnest looking up to God the heart-searcher, to manifest thy self unto thy self.

So for the *methods and depths of Satan* thy unwearied

wearied enemy, which will not be underſtood unleſs ſtudied and minded much. 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. *We are not ignorant*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *of his devices.* He was not ignorant this way, this muſt be knowledge, by minding and ſtudying of them. Though God *teacheth*, yet not without our endeavour, ſetting our thoughts to ſearch and find out his practices and ſubtilties. If we are careleſs herein, God may inſtead *of helping us againſt him*, let him looſe upon us, to act his frauds and fury, that our *buffetings* may awaken us into mindings of him, and endeavours of being acquainted with his devices.

Meditate therefore more to be an *experienced skilful* Artiſt here, and grow more cunning to ſee into his practices.

8. Meditate more of *that enemy the world*, that makes the baits for *covering Satans hooks*, without which he could not ſo catch, as oft he doth; neither could we be *ſo catcht from our own corruptions*, if things of the world did not occaſion our deceivings. *The fuel and tinder is without, the ſpark and fire is within; the luſt is within, but the bait is without.* Jam. 1. 14. *Every one is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own concupiſcence and enticed.* If the bait were nothing to us, there would be no catching of us; if the world were *vanity*, *all things as crucified to us*, having no beauty and lovelineſs in them, there would be no danger. Meditate to a diſcovery more of the worlds vanity, and that inſufficiency in every thing but God, to make us happy; and to thereby a *weanedneſs* of heart from thoſe things that will neither fill or fix, ſatisfie us, or ſtay with us.

CHAP. XIX.

But more particularly.

1. THou must earnestly act and strive to improve thy Meditation on those things which concern thee in thy *rank and age* of Christianity.

There are some Babes, little children in godliness, others are young and strong men, others are fathers, 1o 1 *Joh.* 2. 12, 13, 14. The strong men must act according to their age and rank in Christianity, *not as babes* or little children; the strong Christian must not, does not look to little childrens lessons, return thither, and strive to no more. *Heb.* 5. 12. *To use milk*, stick at barely the *Principles of the Oracles of God* and Doctrine of Christ, *Chap.* 6. *v.* 1. *But uses strong meat*, takes forth the higher lessons in Religion, beyond children. The Apostle saith, *The word was in them, and they had overcome the wicked one.* They were (besides knowledge of the Principles) improved to such knowledge of the Word, higher knowledge, that they knew what was proper of the Word, and how to use it, as fitted them, to combat with Satan, and overcome him. The strong Christian must be busied in *higher matters*; therefore must act Meditation higher, study and learn those lessons, not of the lower forms, but above them. To learn the *Horn-book* or *Primmer*, and keep there, learn no further, cannot become a grown man. A Christian beyond a Babe, must feed above a Babe, a younger one, *feed on strong meat*, must meditate higher, of *growing* in grace, *mortifying* corruptions which are

rising

riſing up; *overcoming* temptations when they aſſault, come it may be thick and fierce. Afflictions that may charge ſmartly, and all ſuch leſſons which ſcholars of a higher form in Chriſts School, are uſually ſet to learn and take forth. Theſe thou muſt make thy ſtudy, thy *peculiar Meditation*, for finding out the beſt way of proceeding in theſe duties.

The young weak Chriſtians, Chriſt ſets not them ſo *high and hard tasks* at their firſt entrance into his School, *Joh.* 16. 12. *I have many things to ſay, but ye cannot bear them now.* Higher matters of *knowledge, harder* matters of practice; but ſtronger Chriſtians muſt have ſtronger meat, and ſtronger exerciſe alſo than Children and Novices. And this for *Chriſts* higher glory, the ſtronger Chriſtians greater improvement and encouragement. This muſt be thy *now-way of Meditation*, how to act higher in thy *now higher rank*. In a word, that thy knowledge, wiſdom, ſtrength, courage, all thy graces may be felt more vigorous and improving, be more evident and ſhining, and Chriſt in them for his glorifying.

2. Meditation, let it be managed for *the beſt thou canſt*, as to all particular caſes, and there *ply moſt* where thou haſt moſt preſſing need. Thus *David* and other holy ones of God endeavoured the exerciſe of Meditation to that particular caſe which then concerned them, to beat out their beſt way of help, as oft in the Pſalms and other places, *Pſal.* 23. *Pſal.* 52. of *Doeg*, *Pſal.* 63. *Pſal.* 77. *Pſal.* 142. Particular caſes had their particular Meditations, as the titles of theſe Pſalms, or their matter ſhews.

In a particular caſe, thou now (it may be) art put upon ſomething *new to thee*; here Meditation ſhould be uſed and continued for, and *until a right*

and

and ſure way be diſcovered for thy beſt help; the *true and ſure Scripture-way* the Saints have gone and found relief in: As what *Abraham* in his tryals did, what *Jacob*, what *Job*, what *David*, what many others in the Old and New Teſtament did, our bleſſed Lord, his Apoſtles and Followers did.

As in caſes of diſeaſes, dangers, troubles, a wiſe man will ſtudy *the right means and manner* how to be helpt. Thus in all caſes, *eſpecially new tasks*, tryals, troubles, and dangers, Meditation ſhould be exerciſed according to the *Scripture-directions* and exples left us.

If the *very particular caſe*, or kind of difficulty be not *to be found* in Scripture, then you muſt by your Meditation *gather your direction by the Rule of Proportion*. Look what was like it; look if there be not the ſame in kind; yet what is to be found as *high* and great, not inferior to thy caſe, if not *higher*.

1. Thy particular caſe, it may be, is ſome *prevailing* corruption, or that which ſtirs and much troubles thee, which Chriſt ſuffers thee to be diſquieted by, ſometimes overcome with, *to ſhew thee* what is in thy heart, to humble thee, and what need thou haſt of his Spirit and Grace to help thee. Thus it was with *Job*, *David*, *Jeremy*, and others.

2. Some *buffeting* it may be of Satan, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. *Paul* had it; ſo it may be thy temptation is *high*, it may be *horrid* againſt God, *unnatural* againſt others, againſt thy ſelf. This *Chriſt in his wiſdom permits*, for learning thee to be a good Champion for him, and to experience his ſuccouring and ſupporting of thee.

3. Or it may be ſome *ſore and ſharp affliction*, ſome

ſome ſudden ſurpriſal, which muſt add to it, as a quicker fire, to refine thee the better.

4. It may be the *caſe of deſertion*, God withdrawing, hiding his face, leaving thee in the dark, as was *Davids* caſe, *Pſal.* 51. 12. *Reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation*; of *Aſaph*, *Pſal.* 77. 7. *Will the Lord caſt off for ever*, Pſal. 88. *Hemans* caſe. Look out and weigh what in theſe caſes the Saints did, and beat out thy way ſo well as thou canſt.

CHAP. XX.

Divers farther Rules.

OTher Particulars yet may be added to the former; as,

1. Thy ſetting Meditation on work for wiſdom in that *great concern*, of *keeping thy heart with all diligence*, *Prov.* 4. 23. The *Art of Heart-keeping*, one of the greateſt skills; therefore for the attaining, it muſt have *great ſtudy* to be in ſome degree a *Maſter in this Art*, and be better in it. 1. Meditation to learn, *thought-government*. Other leſſons formerly took thee up more than keeping thy heart, than *governing* thy thoughts, which among other means muſt be, by 1. *Conſidering* the excellency of the thinking faculty in it ſelf. 2. The *uſes* it is for. 3. The *poyſon of ſin* that hath gotten up to thy *head*, and is occaſioning ſuch vain and vile thoughts, ſuch wildneſs, rovings, inconſtancies, and readineſs to multiply and fix upon either bad or by-things. 4. The *neceſſity* of reducing them, diſlodging them, thoſe vain and vile imaginations. *Jer.* 4. 14. *How long*

long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? ſaith God to the Jews. They ſhould neither *lodge*, as in wicked men, neither *enter* or *ſtay in a good heart*. 5. There ſhould be a coming to have, and *improve in thee an habitual heavenly mindedneſs*.

Strong Chriſtians muſt have a *power* and *rule* over their thoughts, and not be ſatisfied without it in ſome ſort, remembring Gods pure omniſcient eye upon all the thoughts, *Rom.* 2. 16. and his judging hereafter of them at the great day. 6. Thoughts are the ſouls *inlet* into the affections and will, the riſe of willing and affecting, and through them of acting and doing. They are very *quick* and *nimble, yet can be very* deep, intenſe, and ſerious; great reaſon therefore thou haſt to ſtudy, to meditate, to contend to the due regulation of them.

2. Thy Meditation muſt engage in that *hard leſſon*, the *way of ruling thy ſpirit*, as to the affections, pondering and *beating out*, how to govern them. Among the Heathens, the Philoſophers and wiſe men had very *rare Rules* and excellent Sayings about the right ordering the affections: But while they beat the buſh, they loſt the bird. They had not the Word of God, they knew not Chriſt, nor ſanctifying Grace, whereby the wiſdom and only right principles of governing theſe ſo unruly affections, can be attained, and they tamed and tuned.

1. The task is, how to take them off where they are miſplaced, and ſet them on right objects, off the things below, and upon the things above, where they are both *rectified* and *elevated*, and truly *enobled*.

2. As how to take them off wrong objects, ſo *to take them down*, when they are *too hot, high, violent, eager*, to *turn* their edge. 3. To

3. To *ſtir them up*, and make them move, that *either* would not move, or but *ſlowly*, move lazily, and not with that due, earneſt and expedite quick motion when they ought to do it.

Theſe *compriſe the whole Irregularity* of the affections. The true and ſound cure muſt be well ſtudied: *Although ſuch as are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts*, Gal. 5. 24. *Quoad animi propoſitum & cordis purificati principium*, as to the inward living principle, and the real heart-purpoſe, initially and gradually, in little degree (for that which is in no degree begun, is not a grain of muſtard, is nothing at all.) Though thoſe that are in Chriſt have crucified, as we ſaid, their carnal affections in ſome degree: Coming in of Chriſt and Grace into the heart, gives the carnal affections a deadly daſh, like the taking of ſome incurable poyſon given to kill *gradually*. The firſt taking gives the advantage for deaths ſeizing; yet this is not enough, as experience ſadly ſhews: there muſt be a *ſtudying* and great pondering, how to rule the *daily diſcovered* unrulineſs of the affections, and how to cure them, which is not the *Philoſophers* way, nor the *wiſe moral* mans way, which is to *curb* and moderate them; but the Scriptures *directed and commanded* way; and therefore the Chriſtians way that he muſt uſe, and that is to crucifie and mortifie them. *Col.* 3. 5. *Mortifie your affections that are on the earth.* The Art and ſure way for carnal affections, as ſo, and then to *ſtudy to order* theſe affections which are noble natural plants, and diſpoſitions of heart, that they may be acted by graces principle on, and for things heavenly, with a *real warmth* and a *growing fervency*.

3. Strongly

3. Strongly thou must *resolve*, and most exquisitely endeavour to study and meditate for the *government* of thy will. The *will in its nature* and rank is a most noble faculty, the *Empress* of the soul, the *spring* of action, the *weight* and *bias* for motion, the *door* that opens and admits in chusing, or shuts out in refusing; that which *sets up* the mark and aim, every end and interest, and likewise *makes choice* or rejections of the *means* to the end. In its corrupt and carnal state, it is the *wickedest piece* in every person; it sets up the greatest Idol in the world; *Self*, in the Throne above God. Nothing in Scripture hath so *great*, *frequent*, and *high complaints* and charges brought in by God against it, that which is the most *hellish* and *deviliſh* piece in its *repugnancy*, *contrariety*, *stoutness*, and *stubbornness* against God, and whatever is holy; and the hellish *hold-fast of evil*, chiefly when it receives the *grain-colour* and *scarlet-tincture of habit* by customary sinning.

In hearts *changed by grace*, it is in a great measure still *carnal*, and accordingly in part hath all the forementioned wickedness, and is ready to act it, if it be not the *better watcht* and ordered continually.

Being then in the best men so evil, it needs the *best study*, the most serious and constant Meditation to find the best way for it, to rule this unruly will. 1. Especially as to *base self-aims*, in which it is the *most slippery*, and soonest swayed, *hastily hurried*, and entangled. 2. And as to the *cursed contrariety* and hellishness against the Law, will, ways of God, and God himself.

The Art of *ruling this Ruler in chief*, *is well worth thy chiefest Meditation*; the wretchedness of it will disquiet; the *pliantness* and obedience, holiness and purity

purity of its aims, choices, and refusals will comfort most, as *carrying highest evidences* of thy sincerity.

4. Meditation hath great need to act its *part industriously* and accurately, as *to know how to govern the tongue*, that rare instrument, called by *David*, *Psal.* 188. 1. *his glory*. But by sin, called by the Apostle, *Jam.* 3. 8. *An unruly member, full of deadly poyson, that sets on fire the course of nature, is set on fire of Hell, vers.* 6. *David* prays for a watch before his mouth, *Psal.* 39. 1. *I said I will take heed that I sin not with my tongue, and keeping his mouth with a bridle*. To refrain *evil words*, requires care; to refrain vain and *idle words*, requires a *curiosity* and exactness.

Study this Art, not as *Pythagoras* the Philosophers Scholars, that had their *quinquennium silentium*, first spent five years in his School to learn silence; but all a *mans life* is too little. But there's more to be learnt than just silence, and that is *savourinesse* of speaking. *Prov.* 10. 20. *The tongue of the just is as choice silver; the heart of the wicked is little worth*: then and therefore the tongue of the wicked *is little worth*, because the *heart, out of whose abundance the mouth speaketh*, is little worth.

Study the Art of *savoury speaking*, by getting three things. 1. A *good treasure* in thy heart. 2. A *wisdom* to discern times of speaking. 3. A *true, godly, humble boldness* to speak, and not be ashamed, *Psal.* 119. 46. *I will speak of thy testimonies before Kings, and will not be ashamed.*

Meditate for the true Scripture-way for speaking.

5. Meditate how as to *fill up with heart-beauties* of graces within, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, and every particular grace, so to have *a fruitful, shining, exemplary*

exemplary converſation ſuitable to thy rank and ſtation in Chriſtianity.

How to *walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleaſing*, *Col.* 1. 11. To all fruitfulneſs in every good work, in all conditions, and in all *relative duties*, as husband or wife, parent or child, maſter or ſervant, and the reſt. It is *hard* to be good indeed, *harder* to be growing better; *hard* to become and ſuit a change in condition never under before, hard to come up to relative duties, and be Chriſtian in them, and ſo good as a well-grown Chriſtian ſhould be. *Some are very heedleſs here, they too little mind a proportionate growth herein*, as in other parts of godlineſs; but this muſt be minded. Meditate *univerſal growing*, how to honour thy longer ſtanding in godlineſs, by ſhooting up and ſpreading out more.

6. Laſtly, Make it thy *great ſtudy*, how to have ſuitably to thy *rank* in godlineſs a richer treaſury and ſtock of *experiences*, uſeful and rare experiences for thy own and others advantage; make Meditation a *great obſerver*, a *diligent gatherer*, a *careful layer up* of experiences choice and precious, to have a large treaſury, to bring *out of it new and old*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Directions to Christians of the uppermost Rank.

3. FOr such as are *Christians of the highest form* in Christs School, such the Apostle in this, 1 *Joh.* 2. 13. calls *Fathers*; not for their long living here, or being long Christians, visible Members of the Church, as for *great growth* and improvement in real godliness; much Knowledge, Wisdom, Experience, Faith, Love, and Eminencies of Christianity: their Meditation like the highest Artists, must be acted higher.

1. The Meditation of such as are fathers, should *carry higher* in all the ways, and concerning all the several points and particulars formerly expresst, and relating to all persons in general, in all the sorts of Meditation.

1. In the *daily Meditation*, to be more eminently exercised and constant, in *drawing out* a thread of far exacter evenness and equality, without such frequent *breakings off*, and *inconstancies* that younger Christians more unprincipled and unpractised, weaker ones not so enricht with a stock of grace, usually fail in.

2. In this daily Meditation, to be more excellently *skilful* and *wise*, like an *old eminent Artist* that takes up his work, and performs it with rare skill and dexterity, and little or no study, acting out of a habit excellently, without being to seek, raw at his work, or *awk-handed*, as imperfect Artists are. An

old *Bungler* is a ſhameful ſight; but an *old rare ready Artiſt* is glorious.

3. To be more *abundantly warm* and affectionate, acting with greater fervour, in a ſtronger ſtream of *purer love*, higher flame of all holy affections, *aims more ſpiritual*, and richer proportions of all the ingredient aſſiſtant graces required. You muſt be herein (as a Meditation ſo important) an *out-doer* of ſuch, as are in the ranks below thee; *and of thy own former attainments* and actings, making ſure to do in ſome degree *ſuitable* to thy longer ſtanding, and larger opportunities of being a moſt high proficient in this daily duty.

2. Thy Meditation *more peculiar and occaſional* (which in a more ſignal manner thou ſometimes chuſeſt to exerciſe for thy ſouls refreſhing and enlargement) muſt have a more *accurate management* in thy hand; it ſhould be *a ſingular acting, thy right hand ſhould have her rare cunning.*

O what work, what *rare ſpiritual* and heavenly work doth the holy Pſalmiſt *David* (*old in this ſo excellent and ſweet way* of Meditation, this his peculiarly *ſet and ſelected* ſolemn Meditation) doth he make of this way of meditating in ſeveral of the Pſalms he hath left us on Record! In his *younger times*, the times when he firſt gave up his heart to God, he ſoon *learnt to excel* in this Art of Meditation. He was the *ſweet ſinger of Iſrael*, but withal a rare practitioner of *heavenly Meditation.* Not as the too uſual way of the world, whoſe muſick is oft a rather *memorizing* the Heathen Gods and Goddeſſes, or that ravels out in meer *wanton fancies*, but keeps not any due bounds, nor hath any right tendency. But *his way and excellency* was *in Pſalms and*

and Hymns and spiritual songs, for making melody in his heart to the Lord. Not for the *Temple* only, but for his *private recreation.* This we have appearing, *Psal.* 59. *When Saul sent, and they watch the house to kill him,* mentioned 1 *Sam.* 19. 11. So *Psal.* 34. *When David changed his behaviour before the King of Gath,* mentioned in 1 *Sam.* 21. 13. Thus *Psal.* 52. *Of Doegs wickedness,* recorded 1 *Sam.* 22. 9. So *Psal.* 57. & 142. *When David was in the cave,* recorded 1 *Sam.* 24. 3. *Psal.* 56. compared with 1 *Sam.* 21. 11. On which occasion also the forecited 34. Psalm was made, and *Psal.* 63. that so *rare affectionate* one, and many others, which in his way of *occasional meditating*, he penned when a very young man. *Six years* he was banished by *Saul*, or thereabout, *forty years* he reigned; was *thirty years* old when he began to reign; therefore he must be between twenty four and thirty, a young man, when he *penned* the Psalms about *Sauls* persecutions. Thus as he *recreated* himself with all sorts of Musick, so he *rarely improved* it by exercising himself in a way of holy Meditation, *reduced his Harp, Lute*, and all others to heavenly use; so after when he made *musical instruments* for publick Worship in the Temple, *by Gods prescription*, he *meditated* Psalms for that Musick, *assisted* by Gods inspiration. But as all along his time he acted Meditation, and by time excelled more in it; so (pardon this long digression) *he came not short* of his former actings when he was old, yea when very old.

O what *rare pieces* are those last Meditations in 2 *Sam.* 22. *Psalm.* 18. *It hath a twice recording for the more full commending to serious considering* of all that read the Bible.

And the next Chapter, 2 *Sam.* 23. *When he was to dye*; after all his meditatings and ſongs, we have his *laſt Meditation*, ſet intended Meditation, his *Swan-like ſong*, purpoſely left in the firſt part of that Chapter. He goes not out as a *candle* in a ſtink, but like a *rich perfume* caſt upon fire, in a moſt ſweet and *heavenly rapture*. The beſt wine ſhould be at the laſt. Certainly no *old Chriſtians* ſhould live, act, or perform *at the ſame rate* a younger Chriſtian, a weak, and but little grown perſon doth; but do *higher, rarer things*, be ever upon, not only doing, but *ſelf out-doing*; not only on endeavouring ſomething, but *excelling, ſtill contending to ſelf-excelling. Laſt works more than firſt*, Rev. 2. 19. that is *better* than firſt. The formal Chriſtian in a ſort may do more; the right fruitful Chriſtian does better laſt; not more only in number, but in *weight*, in *intrinſick* inward excellency, a better way, a better wiſdom, warmth, delight, evenneſs, exactneſs in all duties, and this Meditation does become *the old aged fathers, their crown of glory is their exceeding themſelves, and evidencing of it.*

3. In your *ſhort ſudden ejaculations* you ſhould ſtrive to excel.

1. How *thick* ſhould theſe *heavenly ſparks* flye up from thy heart, not as ſparks from a common fire, but like *ſparks out of a burning flaming furnace*, like *David*, Pſal. 139. *When I awake, I am ever with thee.* So night and day, all the day thy Meditation ſhould be carrying thee upwards; make many *mountings up* to Heaven.

2. How quick and expedite ſhould this flight to Heaven be, not *ſlow*, but *nimble*, as the flight of longer and ſtronger winged Eagles. Thou ſhouldſt have

leſs

leſs weight hanging on thee. *Heb.* 12. 1. *Caſting off every weight.* The weakeſt muſt begin to caſt off; the ſtronger muſt have *caſt off more*; the *old Chriſtian* muſt have caſt off *moſt weight*, have moſt ſtrength, therefore may mount up quicker and higher.

How pure and ſpiritual ſhould thy *ſhort thoughts* be, like *the ſparklings of the pureſt* and ſtrongeſt wine long cloſe kept. Yea, thou ſhouldſt be able to draw with the threefold cord of *daily*, *occaſional*, and *ejaculatory* Meditation (theſe interwoven together Meditations) draw more ſtrongly off things below, in *fuller diverſions*, *higher deſpiſings* of all empty vanities, and draw *more vigorouſly* upward. The ſetting thy affections on things above, thy eminent acting and fixing them, ſhould be by an eminent firſt *uſing and habiting thy ſpirit* to heavenly mindedneſs. The ſtrongeſt, ſteadieſt, and moſt improved affections ariſe from exacter and more earneſt Meditations. The deeper the foundations of thoughts, the higher the ſtories of thy affections mount up.

CHAP. XXII.

The particular managing of this Meditation.

IN particular thy Meditation ſhould ſo be managed, as to the matter of *knowledge* and *wiſdom*, as to render thee the higheſt Artiſt in thy trade of godlineſs.

1. To be full of knowledge above the weaker Chriſtians, *Rom.* 15. 14. *I am perſwaded you are*

full of knowledge. The young Christian must get knowledge; the strong must have much more: But the old Christian must be very full to be a teacher of others, *Heb.* 5. 12.

2. To have meditated so, as to arrive at *much* wisdom, to understand thy way, and order it best.

A wise Christian *is a person of great* excellency; it is very highly extolled in the Scripture.

This *David*, though not presently, yet attained in time, as *Psal.* 119. 99, 100. *I have more understanding then all my teachers: I have more wisdom then the ancients.*

3. To have the *richest treasury* of heavenly truths, the *fullest stores* of precious experiences, Meditation is the greater gatherer of them, and the improver of them on all occasions.

It becometh not a Christian of *long standing* to be poor and unfurnished of holy experiences.

The Psalmist we may see drawing forth his experiences, and telling them to others, *Psal.* 3. 4, 5. *I cryed, and he heard*; *Psal.* 18. almost all the Psalm, he puts all the *pearls of deliverances* (experiences that way) on one silken thread of this one *Psalm* together. So *Asaph*, *Psal.* 77. 6. *I call to remembrance my song in the night*, what joy he formerly felt, though now he wanted it: Thus oft the Saints in Scripture. The Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who hath delivered, and doth*; he had his experiences ready.

4. More peculiarly *your great exercise* (which others cannot so well reach) is to be much implied in the *deepest* Mysteries, the *highest points of Faith*, and the *hardest matters of practice.* I mean not so much such sorts of difficulties in Divinity, those which

which *great skill in the Tongues and Arts will require*, and that must have long time, much study, which the necessary occasions of very many cannot admit, and are not necessary for every man to understand.

But such *higher matters* of godliness, as may more, *Jude* 20. *edifie you in your holy faith*, increase your obedience to a more fruitful and exact walking, *Eph.* 5. 15. *See ye walk circumspectly*, accurately, or exactly, the word is; thus, the higher contemplations of the Nature of God, his Attributes, and Titles, the *Works of God*, Creation and Providence, his wise, righteous, and holy Administrations and Government.

1. Government in the whole world, and all things in particular in it to the least circumstance, the falling of a hair from the head.

2. Government, and that so *rare* and admirable towards the rational creatures; but most observable *astonishing* towards his Church and his dear Saints. This, as *some of our Divines say of Gods Government of the world and matters* in it, is to be *one* of the great Meditations of Christians, that are by the Apostle called Fathers, who having obtained formerly much acquaintance with other truths, of more necessary use for their then rank and standing, now are to *busie themselves* in these high Mysteries for furthering Faith and Godliness.

The Mysteries in the *two Books of Scripture* and Nature, are the two Tropicks or Lines between which thy Meditation should move and bound, run its course, and keep within this compass, which is useful and safe.

In sum, let thy Meditation be improved all thou

full of knowledge. The young Christian must get knowledge; the strong must have much more: But the old Christian must be very full to be a teacher of others, *Heb.* 5. 12.

2. To have meditated so, as to arrive at *much* wisdom, to understand thy way, and order it best.

A wise Christian *is a person of great* excellency; it is very highly extolled in the Scripture.

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3. To have the *richest treasury* of heavenly truths, the *fullest stores* of precious experiences, Meditation is the greater gatherer of them, and the improver of them on all occasions.

It becometh not a Christian of *long standing* to be poor and unfurnished of holy experiences.

The Psalmist we may see drawing forth his experiences, and telling them to others, *Psal.* 3. 4, 5. *I cryed, and he heard*; *Psal.* 18. almost all the Psalm, he puts all the *pearls of deliverances* (experiences that way) on one silken thread of this one *Psalm* together. So *Asaph*, *Psal.* 77. 6. *I call to remembrance my song in the night*, what joy he formerly felt, though now he wanted it: Thus oft the Saints in Scripture. The Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who hath delivered, and doth*; he had his experiences ready.

4. More peculiarly *your great exercise* (which others cannot so well reach) is to be much implied in the *deepest* Mysteries, the *highest points of Faith*, and the *hardest matters of practice.* I mean not so much such sorts of difficulties in Divinity, those which

which *great skill in the Tongues and Arts will require*, and that must have long time, much study, which the necessary occasions of very many cannot admit, and are not necessary for every man to understand.

But such *higher matters* of godliness, as may more, *Jude* 20. *edifie you in your holy faith*, increase your obedience to a more fruitful and exact walking, *Eph.* 5. 15. *See ye walk circumspectly*, accurately, or exactly, the word is; thus, the higher contemplations of the Nature of God, his Attributes, and Titles, the *Works of God*, Creation and Providence, his wise, righteous, and holy Administrations and Government.

1. Government in the whole world, and all things in particular in it to the least circumstance, the falling of a hair from the head.

2. Government, and that so *rare* and admirable towards the rational creatures; but most observable *astonishing* towards his Church and his dear Saints. This, as *some of our Divines say of Gods Government of the world and matters* in it, is to be *one* of the great Meditations of Christians, that are by the Apostle called Fathers, who having obtained formerly much acquaintance with other truths, of more necessary use for their then rank and standing, now are to *busie themselves* in these high Mysteries for furthering Faith and Godliness.

The Mysteries in the *two Books of Scripture* and Nature, are the two Tropicks or Lines between which thy Meditation should move and bound, run its course, and keep within this compass, which is useful and safe.

In sum, let thy Meditation be improved all thou

canſt for the *ſetting up* of the main mark, for the fulleſt *aiming* at it, the *hardeſt preſſing* toward it, with all *contendings* for an *excellency* of wiſdom, *eminency* of holineſs, exemplarineſs of converſation and exact walking, together with all *induſtriouſneſs* after that *peace which paſſes all underſtanding*, joy unſpeakable and full of glory, *the eſtabliſhings and heightning of them*, with *longings and haſtnings after that appearing of the Lord, and crying, Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.*

Concluſion. Now this ſo *highly important* duty of holy Meditation, having been as to the nature, kinds, neceſſity, and excellency ſo fully diſcovered and demonſtrated; the great ſinfulneſs of neglecting it evinced; the dangers following the neglect manifeſted; the practice with ſuch high inducements, and powerful Scripture-arguments urged home; and the way reſpecting all ſorts of perſons in ſo many Rules and Directions cleared.

Application general. Then *all* who know theſe things are *utterly inexcuſable*, that know theſe ſo greatly neceſſary things, and will not *comply* with the careful practice of them. Ah! therefore *let every one* moſt earneſtly beg it of God, to write *this his Law of holy Meditation in his heart*; to give the *right wiſdom* to underſtand the way of it, the *firm purpoſe* and reſolution conſtantly to perform it, yea, the *practice* of it with ſweeteſt ſolace and higheſt delight. Let me ſay to my ſoul, *Neceſſity is laid upon me.* It is an *Imperial Law* of the great King of Heaven; if I do it not, great *guilt* will be contracted, great *wrath* of a God will be kindled, my ſoul will deeply be *wronged.* If I *have not*, act not *good thoughts*, my heart will *act* evil thoughts, will *fill* with

with evil thoughts, will *fix* and habit it ſelf in them, be *quite* over-run with them.

I ſhall have a *ſpirit ſtained*, deeply dyed into *habitual vanity of mind*; yea, I may be *given up* to judicial penal vanity of thoughts. It may be to *terrifying* and moſt affrighting thoughts. That I which would not be brought to think of the *threatnings* of a juſt God and his terrible Curſes; That would not meditate of that *greateſt of evils ſin*, of my heart and life-ſins, ſhall have *all my ſins* ſet in order before me, held and kept ſtaring me continually in the face. That *I who would not meditate* of the moſt *bleſſed God*, his *Chriſts fulneſs*, his *Spirits ſweetneſs*, his *Heaven* and everlaſting Happineſs, ſhall *now have* repreſented to my thoughts, and be made *to ſee Satan, Hell, and eternal Death continually before me.* Yea, to be under *ſuch amazements and terrours*, to be ſo *haunted* and followed, that at laſt it may be *inſupportable*, and quite overwhelm me.

O therefore let me not ſo ſin againſt my own ſoul, and for ever undo my ſelf by wilful or heedleſs neglecting this duty, which lies ſo indiſpenſibly upon me, and may be ſo advantageous to me!

O how many are *continually guilty of ſelf-deſtroying, for want of a timely ſelf-bethinking*? By a *ſlighter* thinking, for *want of ſerious* thinking? By a *too ſhort thinking*, for want of the neceſſary allowance of time and *ſpace* for thinking? By a *too ſeldom* thinking, and not uſing due frequency of thinking? By acting *meer phanſie* and imagination, and not *wiſe conſideration*? *Adams* firſt ſtate was *good*, yet *mutable*; but it was not a ſin or imperfection to be mutable. And though this mutability of his will was a ground of his fall; yet it was his incogitancy was the

the *first blamable cause*, he fell by *acting sudden, too hasty imagination*, and not *due consideration*; *he considered not all things to be considered*. Thus ever since, the falls of sinners are generally *more by incogitancy, haste*, and *hurries* of fancy and imagination, want of consideration (though there be sins also of deliberation, not precipitations, but presumptions.)

When God *reduces* a sinner, he brings him from *swaying* phansie and carelesness to considerateness, *Ezek.* 18. 28. Because he considers and turns; he breaks the *reeden Scepter* of phansie and inconsideration, and brings in, and sets up the *golden Scepter* of wise consideration. So *Acts* 2. *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Acts 16. 30. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* But O what *pity* is it that any soul should perish, *for want of a little thinking?* Shall I suffer my self to be of that simple sort, and to be carried away in that crowd to utter ruine? If I never yet walkt in this *heavenly thought-way*, the greater reason *I have to hasten* into it.

But if I have tasted, tryed, and found the surpassing sweetness and advantages of it, have I not high encouragement to make a farther progress still in it?

And if by *long beating this path*, I have largely experienced the most abundant pleasantness and sweetness, have I not then greatest inducement to go on the more both evenly and earnestly? Ah! then, my soul, consider with thy self the liberties, the latitudes, the pleasures, and satieties which thy eye may still *expatiate* and recreate it self in, by this rare Art of Divine Meditation.

Look to thy *ways*, thy *eye-ways*, their varieties and excellencies, which are so many, and of that *transcendency*,

tranſcendency, that there never were, nor can be any ſo *various* and ſpacious, of that delicacy, beauty, and glory.

The wiſe and holy heart hath far the advantage of all the great Scholars and Artiſts, all the higheſt Nobles and Princes, he hath *better walks* and rarer *eye-entertainments* in his happy way of Meditation.

Ah! then, my ſoul, how canſt thou in the leaſt ſort be ſlothful and backward to this ſo pleaſant performance, and ſoul-enriching way, this ſo eaſie aſcent to Heaven, by the paths and ſteps purpoſely made thee to mount up thither?

See what plenties of *rare proviſions* are made to entertain and take up thy thoughts; What multitudes of fitteſt objects; What ſweet and precious things lie full before thee, to give thee a full employment, at all times, and with a very great variety, to be a *preventive of wearineſs* and cloying, and introduce a more fulneſs of ſatiety and delight.

Thou haſt that *great Book* of the whole Creation, all the *ſeveral, moſt ſtupendious and glorious* Works of God, to take and look over all the *guilded leaves*, and there to meditate on wonder after wonder.

Thou mayſt *carry thy eye* over all the Earth full of Gods Riches; deſcend into *the bowels of it*, meet with all the hid Treaſures and Rarities lockt up in the Makers rich Cabinet there below: *Thou mayſt go upon* the ſo large extended Waters, *through the paths of the Seas*, ſee the things of excellency in the one and other. Thence thou *mayſt aſcend up* the ſteps and ſtories of the *Air* and *Firmament*, the *glorious Heaven* beyond it, with the ſo *glorious Lights* of ſuch aſtoniſhing magnitudes and *motions*, *orders*, *and*

and influences. Thence then mount up thou mayſt to the higheſt Heaven, that moſt holy place, the *Worlds* moſt glorious piece and fabrick, that Palace of the King of Glory, with all his ſo glorious Retinue and *Attendants* of *millions of millions* of moſt happy Saints and Angels.

O what an ample proviſion is this for my ſpirits particular help and ſolace, my *eye-accommodation* and recreation? Yea, how unſpeakably gracious muſt I have declared my God to be towards me; had I only been favoured with the ten thouſand part of the things my Meditation can recreate it ſelf upon?

Ah! but, my ſoul, thou haſt more *graciouſly* afforded thee by thy God another book, that richeſt Treaſure of moſt infallible, neceſſary, and ſaving Truths; there may I moſt highly meditate and ſatiate my ſelf with that higheſt Myſtery of godlineſs, all the wonders coucurring and meeting to make it up; and among them, that moſt eſpecially of the ſo *aſtoniſhing*, ſo *all-amazing Myſtery of God manifeſted in the fleſh.* The very *higheſt thought-walk* given for a created Nature to take *its moſt raviſhing ſolace in.* Not only for ſinners redeemed by the Lord of Glory; but thoſe of *that uppermoſt rank of Nature* that never needed a Saviour from ſin; yet being mutable creatures, might all have fallen. But in Chriſt their Head, being given in their election to him, and thence preſerved by him. Theſe bleſſed Angels have this Myſtery of Godlineſs, this Lord of Glory Jeſus Chriſt, their Head of continuation of happineſs, the moſt tranſcendent object of their higheſt contemplation and admiration.

O what an account then ſhall I render to my God,

God, if I do not deſign and endeavour Meditation in ſome good degree *proportionate*, and anſwering the ſo *inconceivable eye-obligation* and engagement herein lying on me.

But O my ſoul, this is not all, thou haſt yet another *Book*, beſides that of the Creature, and the other of Scripture; the book of thy *own ſelf, ſtate*, and heart, wherein with ſingular advantage thou mayſt conſtantly buſie thy thoughts moſt ſeriouſly. And if thou art Chriſts Temple, knoweſt his dwelling in thee, thou mayſt find it like the ſo glorious Temple of *Solomon*, built of coſtly ſtones of ſpiritual excellencies, over-laid with that pure gold of inward Holineſs and Sanctification throughout. Having in it that fire of heavenly love deſcended on it, burning in it; the *Altar* for offering thy ſelf by Chriſt in thee a whole burnt-offering; the golden Altar Chriſt for *the perfuming of all thy ſervices* to aſcend as Incenſe up to God, and be pleaſing, moſt ſweet, and acceptable with him. There you may *find the golden Lamps* with the ſeven glorious lights, the Lord of light, thy wiſdom, making thee light, and ſhining in heavenly knowledge and wiſdom. Nay, there may be found the *golden Ark*, with the Teſtimony, the Law by the finger of Chriſt written on *the fleſhly tables of thy heart*, and the Mercy-ſeat or Propitiatory, whereby thou art made to God a friend by Chriſt who is the Propitiation, reſiding in the Temple, the hidden man of thy heart; the Cherubims of glory cover thee, and thy whole man made the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt dwelling and working in thee.

O what precious matter of Meditation may thy own glorious ſtate, and the *beauties of Graces* and Holi-

Holineſs, the new creature formed in thee, after the image of Chriſt, and the Spirit of life and power, to the higheſt praiſe of the infinite love of the moſt bleſſed God, afford thee; even that God who in riches of free grace hath thought upon, and from all Eternity choſen thee to be a veſſel of glory and honour?

O how many and many *rare objects*, as have been formerly expreſt, are given and ſet before thee to improve Meditation upon? And to and above all, if there be not enough, large enough, high enough, ſweet enough, and ſatisfying; thou haſt to ſearch and dive farther into the infinite power of the *All-ſufficient* God, eſpecially his infinite lovelineſs and ſweetneſs, to take thy higheſt ſolace, fulleſt ſatisfaction in.

Ah! then my ſoul, lift up to the *utmoſt* thy ſelf in moſt glorious *praiſes* unto thy God, who hath appointed ſuch a way as this of heavenly Meditation, to *hedge in* thy thoughts, wildneſs, and wandrings; to *help up* thy thought, otherwiſe earthlineſs: *Bleſs him with all that is within thee* for vouchſafing and ſanctifying ſo happy a way for thy both *thought-imployment* and *improvement*. *Bleſs him* with all *heart-enlargements* thou canſt for making thee ſo *ſpacious and large walks*.

Moſt highly rejoyce in him who hath afforded thee ſo tranſcending, pleaſant, and delightful walks for thy thoughts to *take their happy turns in*.

Say unto thy God, *O what is man that thou art ſo mindful of him*? ſo *mindful of that ſilly mind of man*, as to *prepare and fit for him* ſuch bleſſed *mind-walks*, and theſe in ſo *great variety of excellency*, ſpiritual excellency for ſuch pure pleaſure, and raviſhing delight.

O then

O then my ſoul, *never deny* the doing of this work, never *defer the doing* to a better time, when time is now.

O be not heartleſs and liſtleſs, dead and dull, not uneven and inconſtant in the fervent performance of it.

O daily contend to *higher excellency* in this heavenly Art, to have *the wings of thy ſpirit* longer and ſtronger, to ſoar *a higher pitch*, to take a more nimble flight, and make *larger returns* of bleſſed advantages, in peace, joy, ſatisfactions of raviſhments and higheſt raptures of ſpirit, and by this *aſſent* of holy Meditation, mount up ſtill higher and higher till thou toucheſt Heaven it ſelf, till contemplation ends in viſion and fruition of the moſt infinitely glorious God himſelf. Viſion is accompanied with plenary and moſt perfect ſatisfaction, perfect happineſs for ever. To which moſt *unſpeakably* glorious God, the moſt infinitely *higheſt Beauty* and Excellency for the eye by contemplation to act and dwell upon; the Father, chiefly in his *infinite riches* of free Grace; the Son, in his *infinite fulneſs* of Redemption; the Holy Spirit, in his *moſt glorious* Inhabitation and Application of that Redemption, be Honour, Glory, and everlaſting Praiſes of Saints and Angels for ever. Amen.

Soli Deo gloria.

FINIS.